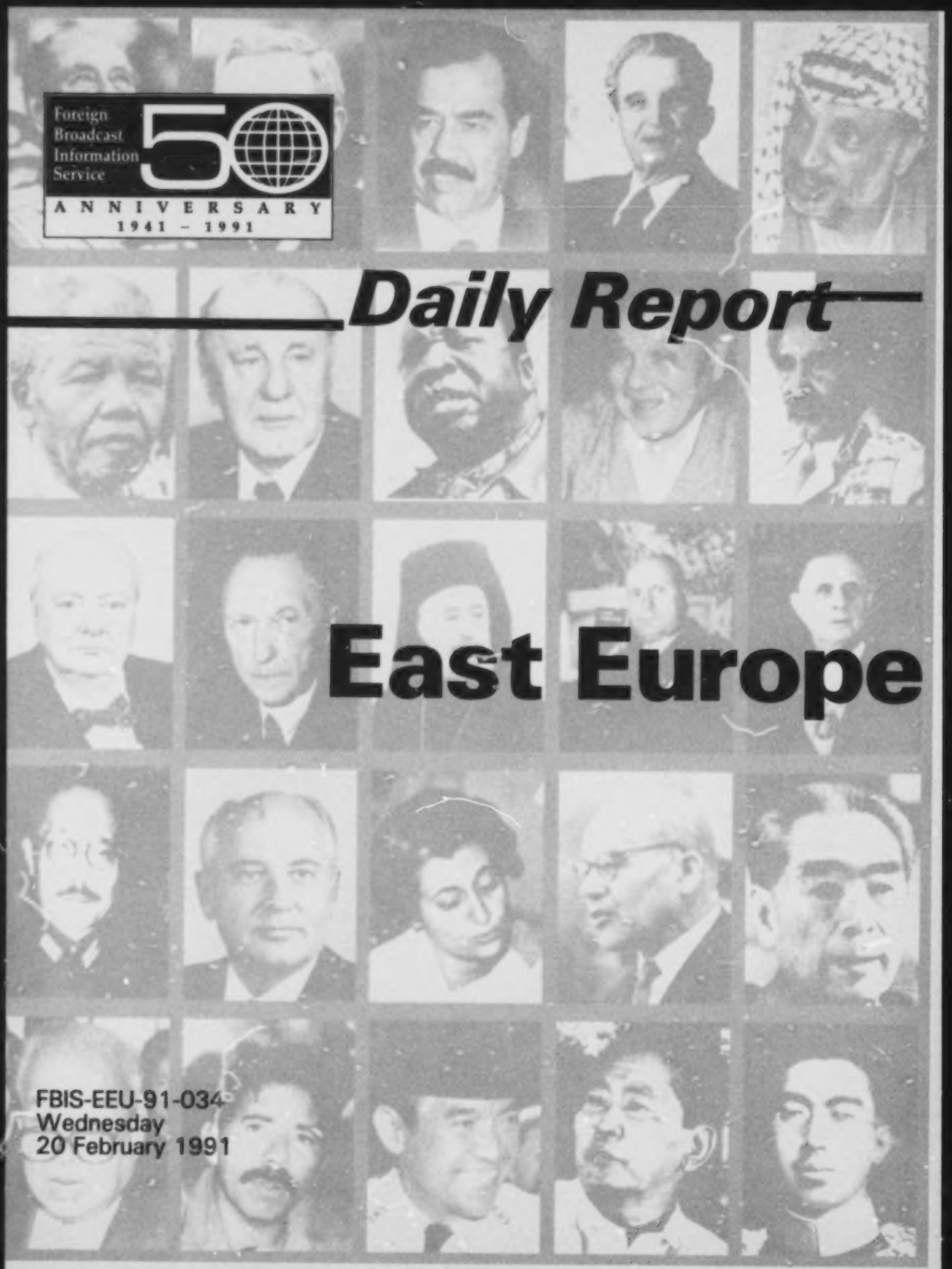

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East Europe

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Zhelev Adviser Avramov on Warsaw Pact Future

AU1902155391 Sofia OTECHESTVEN VESTNIK in Bulgarian 13 Feb 91 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Ognyan Avramov, "secretary of the president's office and military expert," by Georgi Miloshev; place and date not given—"No Joke—Warsaw Pact Can Be Dissolved on 1 April"—first two paragraphs are OTECHESTVEN VESTNIK introduction]

[Text] In his letter to Zhelyu Zhelev, President Mikhail Gorbachev expressed the opinion that the military organization of the Warsaw Pact can be dissolved on 1 April 1991. According to him, relations between the member states must develop in the future on a bilateral basis.

Ognyan Avramov, secretary of the cabinet of the president and military expert, was not surprised by this step on the part of the Soviet president. He interprets it as an expression of Gorbachev's willingness to prove that his country's foreign policy remains unchanged, "despite certain recent shocks."

[Miloshev] Do you see the letter as an attempt to restore confidence?

[Avramov] Yes, and also as an attempt to legalize a process which already started. In fact, the Warsaw Pact's military structure already is empty of any contents.

[Miloshev] Nevertheless, we Bulgarians used to see the Warsaw Pact as a shield of sorts. Now we are deprived of it, while we do not have a new one. Is our national security threatened?

[Avramov] Let us view things in the following manner: The soldier in the battlefield somehow lost his shield. Does it mean that he is defenseless?

[Miloshev] He still has his sword.

[Avramov] Precisely. The sword—those are the our Armed Forces, capable of defending the country. There also is something else, which is very important, namely, the behavior of the soldier. As far as I am concerned, a sensible foreign policy could provide more guarantees than an obsolete military bloc.

[Miloshev] Yes, especially today. Do you think that we should join NATO? Is it necessary and when should it take place?

[Avramov] I will answer the three questions with the evasive "hardly," rather than with he categorical "no." It could be very easy and simple to hide immediately behind the shield (or the umbrella, if you prefer), of another bloc. Then we could continue to live peacefully and calmly. However, this cannot be expected, at least not in the near future. Furthermore, I do not know whether this will actually take place. You certainly have noticed that the prevailing tendency in NATO also is to strengthen the political element. Therefore, its role in the future will be to cooperate in constructing the all-European structures, and subsequently—the common security.

[Miloshev] Do you believe that NATO will interfere in an attempt to prevent fighting, if an alarming situation emerges?

[Avramov] This would be totally logical against the background of the changes in Eastern Europe and dissolving the Warsaw Pact's military structures. It is logical to expect that NATO would have the role of a regulator (and why not arbitrator?) in any conflicts between European countries.

[Miloshev] When do you think that the process which started within the Warsaw Pact member states will end?

[Avramov] The elimination of the military organization is the most decisive step toward the goal that was chosen. Gorbachev proposed 1 April. Less than two months remain until then.

Egypt's Ghali Discusses Gulf War, PLO

AU1802094291 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 13 Feb 91 p 8

["Exclusive" interview with Dr. Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, by Gordana Logar in Belgrade; date not given: "Husayn's Present to Israel"]

[Text] Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, is representing the Egyptian side at the Belgrade meeting of representatives of 15 nonaligned countries who are going to try to offer a solution for ending the war in the Gulf. As he has been present on the world political scene for a long time and possesses great diplomatic experience, it was logical to expect him to agree to talk even about the topics that are usually deemed less pleasant.

Leaving the Belgrade nonaligned conference itself in the background, we started our conversation with a question usual for such occasions, Arab unity and the threat of fundamentalism.

"There is no doubt," Mr. Ghali says, "that the Gulf war has contributed to new divisions in the Arab world, but I would view the matter in retrospect. This is not the first division among us and is not going to be the last, either. However, it is the fact that Arab solidarity has always prevailed at the end and that various divisions have usually been overcome. This is going to be the case this time, too, because, the moment the war is over, Arab solidarity will reappear on the scene and I am convinced that we are going to overcome this most recent disagreement, as well.

The Farther, the More Radical

"Regarding fundamentalism, I must say that it is a marginal phenomenon. At least, that is the case in my country, and the situation is not different in other Arab countries, however different it may seem to be. We have been having to deal with them for a long time and have managed to push them to the margin and keep them there. As early as in the times of King Faruq, they tried to assassinate two prime ministers, but they did not

succeed. We kept them under control during the times of al-Nasir, because they tried to assassinate him, as well. Unfortunately, they managed to assassinate President al-Sadat, and this is why we are controlling, stopping, and suppressing them even more. Their representatives in our Parliament have never constituted more than 2 to 3 percent. Moreover, I assert that not only are they a marginal phenomenon, but that they enjoy no public support, although they are very active and—perhaps just for that reason—very militant. They definitely represent no danger for the Arab world.

[Logar] Nevertheless, Saddam Husayn has already become a legend among many Muslim communities, and the feeling seems to be spreading, judging at least from the news coming from various sides, including Asia.

[Ghali] It is rather clear that, in principle, radicalism in the Third World is proportionate to the distance from a hotbed of crisis. The farther you are from the Gulf, the easier it is to be radical. For this reason, as well as other things, I do not consider any radicalism, as well as fundamentalism, a serious phenomenon.

[Logar] Do you view terrorism and the ever more frequent threats in a similar way?

[Ghali] Yes, I think that exaggerations are made also in that respect. I think that terrorism is not such a great problem, at least not as it seems to some people or it is not great to the extent some people would like it to be.

[Logar] Do you see a danger of divisions in the coalition, the allied forces, if Israel nevertheless responds, particularly after the most recent attacks which are more and more frequent and cause more and more casualties, and since Israel is paying a price without participating?

[Ghali] I do not know if Israel will join in (the war) after these most recent attacks, but I think that this would not entail any danger for the coalition, it would only make the situation more complicated. The coalition is strong and there is no danger of divisions while the war lasts, but Israel's joining in might make things more complicated after the war. There is no danger today of divisions in the Arab world within the coalition in the Gulf war. We are all together going to do everything with a view to maintaining the alliance, because, after all, more than a half of the Arab world is there. One in three Arabs in the world is an Egyptian. If one adds Syrians and Saudis to that, we are a real majority.

What is even more important for this conflict in the Gulf is that Iraq is on one side and Kuwait and everybody else are on the other. This is why it is important that everything should remain within an Arab-Arab conflict and that an intervention of another country should be avoided. We are asking Israel all the time to be calm and reserved, because its joining in would really cause complications, although it would not break the coalition.

There Is Nevertheless a Connection

[Logar] Are you considering holding a conference on the Middle East, among other things, after the war?

[Ghali] This is our very aim in fact, because solving the Palestinian problem is the way to solve the Gulf problem completely. If we are against the political linkage [preceding word in English] between Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories and Iraq from Kuwait, as we really are, this does not mean that this connection, this linkage, does not really exist. After all, this same Security Council used to demand Israeli withdrawal and to adopt the same kind of decisions in that respect. This is why what we resolutely advocate is that the moment the Gulf crisis is concluded by Iraq withdrawing from Kuwait or Kuwait being liberated from Iraq, a new peace process should be opened with a view to solving the Palestinian problem as well.

[Logar] Would that not grant Husayn a certain advantage of the kind: Had it not been for the occupation of Kuwait, there would be no such conference, particularly not immediately?

[Ghali] No. On the contrary, the opposite is true. By occupying Kuwait and thus causing an Arab-Arab conflict, Saddam Husayn has made the best present to Israel and everybody can see and be aware of that.

[Logar] Are you then not disappointed by Yasir 'Arafat's support for Husayn? Were you surprised?

[Ghali] I am neither disappointed nor surprised, but I think that he has made a mistake, although that is not the reason for us not to keep relations with the PLO. We have completely different opinions, stands, and approaches, but we know that his opinion is a result of Israel's frustration and inability to talk with him. As early as on 14 November three years ago, the PLO recognized the state of Israel, Resolution 242, and did everything to open a dialogue. It has received nothing in return.

[Logar] The other side is always pointing to the role of the radical wings in the PLO.

[Ghali] I do not agree with that. I think that radical wings are in fact in Israel and are headed by Mr. Sharon and other Likud members.

[Logar] How do you comment on assertions that the United States wants to remain in the region even after the war and to have a strong influence on the development of events and do you think that the war operations carried out so far have exceeded the mandate given by the Security Council?

[Ghali] We posses no information that they want to stay; on the contrary, what we have are only the assurances that they will leave the very moment Iraq leaves Kuwait. As regards war operations and the mandate being exceeded, how are you going to free Kuwait if you do not fight against the Iraqis?

University Students' Strike Continues in Tirana

Council of Ministers Resists Demands

AU1702202291 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Statement by the Council of Ministers in Tirana on 16 February]

[Text] The Council of Ministers, at its meeting on 16 February 1991, discussed the demand of a group of students from the Enver Hoxha University of Tirana regarding the removal of the name carried by this important educational institution.

The discussion reached the following conclusions.

1. The name and work of Enver Hoxha are not exclusively tied to the Albanian Workers' Party. As the leader of the Antifascist National Liberation War and founder of the new Albanian state, Enver Hoxha belongs to the entire people. The Council of Ministers is therefore not in agreement with the demand that has been submitted.

2. The demand for a solution of such a matter through a referendum cannot be met for two reasons. First, the entire Albanian people must declare their views on such problems, not a particular group of students, teachers, and working people from one institution. Second, on the basis of Article 67 of the Constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, decisions to hold referendums of all kinds are in the competence of the People's Assembly. As is well known, the People's Assembly, because its mandate has come to an end under Article 68 of the present Constitution, cannot meet. This issue must therefore be decided by the future Assembly.

3. Although about three-quarters of the students of the University are scattered among their families in the districts, a group of students have said that they will declare a hunger strike if their demand for the change of the university's name through a university referendum is not met. The Council of Ministers considers this to be step leading to increased social tensions; therefore, this group is called on to consider and act with prudence and without passions, to abandon their stand that harms themselves and arouses the concern of their parents, relatives, and society in general.

4. The Council of Ministers calls on all political parties and social organizations, in support of the agreement reached among themselves, to realistically commit all their energies to avoiding such incidents that do not help to secure the necessary social peace for the normal conduct of the election campaign. This would not only help the Council of Ministers and other state services and the economy in confronting the economic and social difficulties facing the country but would also assist the various political and social forces in their efforts to obtain a democratic and realistic solution to the problems which have arisen.

The Council of Ministers, Tirana, 16 February 1991.

Referendum on University Name Demanded

AU1702211791 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 2100 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] The managing commission of the strike of students at Tirana University and the Tirana colleges stated to the press today, in addition to earlier statements, that before they start a hunger strike, the students will wait until 1100 on Monday for a reply confirming that Enver Hoxha's name will be removed from Tirana University on the basis of a referendum within the university. All students, teachers, and working people of the university will take part in the referendum. It also states that they feel it a moral and patriotic duty to dissociate themselves from all destructive forces, both illegal ones and those acting in the name of the law, the statement of the strike's managing commission concludes.

Hunger Strike Starts To Change University's Name

AU1802104891 Paris AFP in English 1020 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 18 (AFP)—Some 250 students and teachers began a hunger strike on Monday to press their demand for Tirana's Enver Hoxha University to change its name, dropping the reference to the country's strongman from 1945 until his death in 1985, a local journalist reached by telephone said.

The university has been on strike since February 6, the longest strike in the history of communist Albania. The authorities on Saturday turned down the students' demand for a referendum to be held on changing the university's name before general elections on March 31. The government has refused on the grounds that "the name and achievements on Enver Hoxha are not solely associated with the Albanian Communist Party, but belong to the people as a whole", it said in a communique reproduced by the news agency ATA.

Students went on strike initially to back their demands for better living conditions. After the authorities failed to keep their promises, the students called for the government to resign and the university's name to be changed.

The students refused to listen to an appeal to resume lectures last week issued by the country's current strongman, Ramiz Alia, and Interior Minister Hekuran Isai.

Tirana university has 10,000 students.

'More Than 700' Students Participate

AU1802212091 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 2100 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Dissenting from the statement of the Council of Ministers, which did not agree to change the university's name, students of various faculties assembled this morning on Democracy Square on the campus, waiting to hear another reply from the government by 1100. When this deadline expired, the organizing commission announced a hunger strike. At 1230, more that 700

students and teachers entered the student (?cinema), where the hunger strike is to take place, thus creating a very delicate situation. The forces for the maintenance of order immediately surrounded the site where the strike is taking place.

Hunger Strike Enters Second Day

AU1902151591 Tirana International Service in German 1330 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Seven hundred and twenty girls and boys of Tirana university and 40 teachers have spent their first night on hunger strike. They spent the night in the large auditorium of the student club, some with woolen blankets and some without, but all resolved to continue their hunger strike and their struggle. The students hold the view that there can be no depoliticization of the university as long as it continues to bear a party name. The students hald discussions with the Albanian Education Minister Skender Gjinushi and the Deputy Minister Ismail Ahmeti late into last night. The students reaffirmed their determination to continue the strike. The academic staff have expressed their solidarity with them.

Telegram Sent to Perez de Cuellar

AU1902172791 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1700 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The students of the Enver Hoxha University of Tirana are continuing their hunger strike. The students' cinema, where the strike is taking place, is surrounded by hundreds of students and inhabitants of Tirana, mainly the parents of the striking students. The situation inside is quiet and without worrisome problems. The students have sent a telegram to the Presidium of the People's Assembly and to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Radio Reports Continuing Hunger Strike

AU1902211291

[Editorial Report] Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian at 1900 GMT on 19 February carries seven minutes of reports on the continuing hunger strike by students of Enver Hoxha University of Tirana.

Against a background of cheers, shouts, and indistinct rhythmic slogans, correspondent (?Timo Leto) states: "This is the second day of the hunger strike at the students' campus. The students' cinema is no longer surrounded by the forces of order, but by hundreds of students and inhabitants of the city of Tirana, parents of the striking students among them. With tears in their eyes, mothers and sisters gaze in anguish at the windows of the building in which their children and brothers have confined themselves. Silence prevails inside, while outside there is no end to the ovations of solidarity. It is very difficult to enter the cinema, and the door was only opened for us out of respect for our duty, and because of the need of those inside to inform the people about their strike."

In the cinema, "young people have spread blankets on the floor, and are lying on them. Some sit on chairs, talking to each other. People must talk and move as little as possible. Although the hall is very cramped, order prevails everywhere. Internal regulations have been imposed, forbidding cheers and communication outside. Any striker is free to leave if he feels it is necessary. Any official statement must be approved by all the strikers. One of the areas in building has been turned into a room for the work of the Organizing Commission, where we met Arben Lika, one of the organizers of this commission, who gave us a report on the situation here.

In a recorded statement, Lika states that "720 students and several dozen teachers are taking part in the strike, and students have also come from other colleges, such as Kamze, as have part-time students and students from the Elbasan Pedagogical High School. There have been other applications for inclusion in the strike, but they are not being accepted, because of the restricted living space." Lika states that "the condition of the students is generally good, except for a few with slight complaints, who received medical treatment at once."

The reporter also interviews another member of the strike's organizing commission, who states that "so far, we have received 64 messages of solidarity and copies of telegrams sent to the Presidium of the People's Assembly and its president, Ramiz Alia. I wish to mention the message of 365 working people of the radio and television." The commission member also mentions messages from enterprises, schools, the national theater, various villages, and a "petition sent to Ramiz Alia by the Tirana Textile Combine, signed by 1,900 people."

The reporter also interviews a doctor "attached to the Health Ministry," who states that "the students' state of health does not present serious problems," and describes the organization of supplies of medicines and medical staff. The reporter states that "the striking students have sent telegrams to the Presidium of the People's Assembly, Pristina University, and UN General Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar."

The announcer provides "the latest news from the students' strike at 1930," and states that "although the first day passed in calm and without worry, the situation on the second day is serious. So far, four students have been sent to the hospital."

Alia Discusses Strike With Opposition Parties

AU1902203591 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Comrade Ramiz Alia, president of the Presidium of the People's Assembly, yesterday evening received leaders of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party and discussed with them the demonstrations of the students of Tirana university and their demands. Comrade Ramiz Alia, after listening attentively to the views and arguments they presented, asked them together and

each party individually, bearing in mind the lofty interests of the homeland, the future of our young people, and the vital need to maintain order and the law and to secure a calm situation before the elections, to exert all their influence to find the best, most reasonable, and most just solutions for this critical and delicate problem.

Support for Student Strikers Increases

'Emergency Plenum' Convened

LD1902171591 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1610 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Ohrid, 19 Feb (TANJUG)—Students of Enver Hoxha University in Tirana continued their hunger strike today. An increasing number of citizens of the Albanian capital are expressing their solidarity with the students. According to reports from Tirana, several thousand people have expressed their support in front of the sports center in the student quarters, shouting "Students, we are with you." Among them were students, relatives of the striking students, and workers.

Some 720 striking students have barricaded themselves in the building, where they are keeping peace and order, not permitting anyone to enter the building without their permission.

The ruling party, it has been learned, has convened an emergency plenum. The police have been patroling the student quarters in Tirana.

The leading Albanian opposition party, the Democratic Party, and members of several newly formed independent trade unions have supported the student demands.

The striking students demand, apart from the change of the university's name, the resignation of several government members, and in particular, the ministers of justice, internal affairs, and foreign affairs.

According to Tirana sources, the striking students today sent telegrams with their demands to the presidium of the Albanian People's Assembly, the UN secretary general, and the Tirana-based Albanian Forum for Human Rights and Freedoms.

At the same time in Kosovo, appeals are being issued to the striking students to end their protest and resume their studies.

On behalf of the Forum of Kosovo Intellectuals [Forum Intelektualaca sa Kosova], Academician Mak Krasnici stressed in his message to the students that he is upset by developments and the situation, which are detrimental to the stability and sovereignty of Albania. The message goes on to say: "We want democratic Albania to march toward Europe. Hence we are calling on you to return to your studies, work, and production. Kosovo is calling on you not to forget this: Do not allow Albania to be destroyed by chaos and anarchy. Democracy is not anarchy; return to unity and tolerance, which are in the interest of the country."

A call for ending the student's hunger strike and for resumption of studies was sent yesterday by a former top Kosovo and Yugoslav functionary Mahmut Bakali, who stressed the responsibility involved in this historic moment, which is important not only for Albanians not only in Albania, but in general. These appeals were joined by a representative of the Djakovo-based Democratic Christian Party.

Albanian television last night broadcast the news of the trial and verdicts on three young Albanians who were labeled terrorists because they killed two Albanian border guards near Tropoja on 15 January, while escaping to Yugoslavia. One was sentenced to death, and the other two received sentences of 20 and 12 years' imprisonment.

PPSh Plenum Discusses Strike

AU1902203391 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Statement by the Albanian Workers Party Central Committee issued in Tirana on 19 February]

[Text] At its meeting today, the Albanian Workers Party [PPSh] Central Committee was informed of and discussed events in connection with the demonstrations and strike of a section of the students of the Enver Hoxha University of Tirana. It observed that the government, with a high sense of responsibility and understanding, has made every effort, even under the country's difficult economic and financial conditions, to meet many of their demands that were just. No generation of students studying at the university has had better living and studying conditions than today's generation. As a result of the democratic transformations undertaken by our party, the preconditions now exist at the university for a truly creative atmosphere and for the wide and effective participation of students in the academic management of the university. The university and all higher education has been democratized, and will be further democratized. In this process, students voices and opinions will be heeded attentively and with respect; however, even democracy has its rules and limits. The danger of its abuse always exists, which results in anarchy, especially in the first phase of party political and ideological pluralism.

The PPSh Central Committee, fully supporting the statement of the Council of Ministers of 16 February 1991, calls on the striking students of Tirana university not to engage in conceptual problems, and not to make certain demands that are not related to the sphere of students and teachers, but to the sphere of political struggle among parties. The PPSh Central Committee calls on the students to withdraw their unfair political demands, and from their unfair way of solving them. It expresses the hope that the students will not allow their strike to move into extremism, which would make its solution more difficult, but to recommence normal student life, especially in their classes.

The PPSh Central Committee calls on all political and social forces to think seriously about this issue and to exert maximum efforts to prevent it from deteriorating. It turns to the country's entire public, with all the prudence that has characterized the Albanian people at difficult times, to persuade its student sons and daughters to judge with reason and cool heads.

Plenum of the PPSh Central Committee. Tirana, 19 February 1991.

Tirana Workers Show Support

AU2002130491 Paris AFP in English 1241 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Belgrade, Feb 20 (AFP)—Thousands of Albanian workers took to Tirana streets Wednesday [20 February] in support of striking students calling for the resignation of the defence and foreign affairs ministers and a name change for the En[illegible] Hoxha University, an Albanian journalist reported.

Early Wednesday, police and the Army patrolled streets in Tirana where tensions ran high, according to witnesses contacted by AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. Opposition groups feared a government crackdown to bring the situation under control. [passage omitted]

The strike, organized by the first independent trade union, was not announced officially but on bills in the streets, sources said Wednesday, adding that there were no buses while roads were packed with people. About 700 students and some of the university staff went on hunger strike Monday to press their demands and were joined late Tuesday by up to 3,000 people. The students have accused Defence Minister Kico Mustaqi, Foreign Minister Reis Malile, and other leaders of "hindering the process of democratisation" in Albania. The students' strike committee is headed by Fine Arts students Blendi Gonxhe.

The journalist contacted by AFP said police cordoned off the campus early Wednesday after authorizing Tirana residents to talk to the students Tuesday. "Hunger-striking students are desperate. After the Communist Party leadership's refusal Tuesday to meet their demands, they have for the first time shouted slogans hostile to President Ramiz Alia," he added.

Students have been out since February 6 in what is the longest strike in communist Albania, and said they will continue their movement "until the finish". Minister of Education Skender Gjinushi has ordered all schools to be closed, officially for lack of fuel, until the end of the week, but students at several universities in the provinces have been reportedly backing the strike. [passage omitted]

In another development, Albania announced the release of 108 political prisoners. ATA news agency quoting a communique by the opposition Human Rights Forum said the dissidents were released in early February. Since the beginning of the year, Albanian authorities have freed more than 500 political prisoners, mostly detained for "anti-state propaganda" or attempts to defect to foreign countries. In a bid to enhance the country's human rights record, authorities have pledged that all political prisoners will be released before the March 31 elections. Interior Minister Simon Stefani put the number of common-law and political prisoners at 3,850 in February last year.

Miners Also Call For Strike

AU1902151791 Paris AFP in English 1507 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 19 (AFP)—Albania's miners, who this month formed the first offically authorised free trade union, called for a general strike Tuesday in support of students on strike at Tirana university, an reliable source in the Albanian capital said.

The miners' union, which was legalised Monday, called for a strike late Tuesday if student demands were not accepted by the authorities, Prec Zogaj, a member of the opposition Democratic Party, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE by telephone.

The students have been on strike since February 6 in support of a demand that the name of the university, currently the Enver Hoxha University, be changed. Enver Hoxha, Albania's first communist ruler, headed a harshly repressive and largely isolated regime from 1945 until his death in 1985.

About 700 students and some of the university staff went on hunger strike Monday to press their demand. The students are also calling for improvements in their living conditions and for the resignation of Defence Minister Kico Mustaqi, of Foreign Minister Reis Malile, and of other leaders who in their view are "hindering the process of democratisation" in Albania.

The campus of Tirana university was still cordoned off by police Tuesday. The measure was taken Monday to prevent hundreds of people joining the students on strike, Mr. Zogaj said.

The Democratic Party is one of several opposition parties preparing for the country's first free postwar elections on March 31.

PDSh Branch Supports Demands

AU1502211991 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Students of various faculties again gathered to take part in a rally on Democracy Square in the student campus today. The organizing group informed a radio and television reporter that this rally would be held at 1000, even though no authorization for such a rally had been issued by the competent authorities. Azem Hajdari said that we are in our own home, and therefore have no need to ask permission from anybody. Thus, a short rally was held in this square at 1000. After this rally, which

took place in an entirely correct way, the students dispersed to their dormitories. Azem Hajdari gave to the radio and television reporter a communique from the Democratic Party's [PDSh] branch for higher educational institutions, with the following text:

The PDSh branch for higher educational institutions in Tirana supports and considers to be just all the economic and political demands of the students of Tirana University, but this branch dissociates itself from calls for blood and violence, and considers them to be the provocations of certain elements that call themselves democrats, but which are essentially extremist. The student (?movement) makes it known that elements exist that have nothing in common with the PDSh, and represent forces other than the PDSh.

PDSh 'Reaffirms' Support

AU1902214791 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 2100 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Statement by the Managing Commission of the Democratic Party issued in Tirana on 19 February]

[Text] The Managing Commission of the Democratic Party [PDSh], assessing the course of events at the students' campus, where a large number of students and teachers of the university have continued their hunger strike for two days, issues the following declaration to the entire national and international public: The Commission reaffirms its unreserved support for the students' demands to change the name Enver Hoxha University of Tirana and their commitment to find the best possible solution to problems. The Commission thinks that the demands, commitments, and efforts of the students are just and legitimate and as such have nothing to do with elements destabilizing the situation in the country. On the contrary, the PDSh takes the view that the Albanian Government has not only shown itself to be clumsy in solving the problems on time, but that its statements close off avenues for further dialogue.

The hunger strike, as one of the most serious forms of the students' peaceful protests, affects everybody in Albania. The PDSh, considering dialogue to be possible and democratic, finds all forms of imposition unacceptable. It calls on President Ramiz Alia to intervene urgently to solve the problem before the strike escalates to the scale of a national disaster with irreparable consequences.

Managing Commission of the PDSh. Tirana, 19 February, 1991.

Human Rights Forum Voices Support

AU1902152291 Tirana International Service in German 1330 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] On the evening of 18 February, representatives of the Forum for the Defense of Human Rights visited the students and lecturers of Tirana colleges who have started a hunger strike and explained:

Under these difficult conditions, the Forum supports the students' well-known demands. The Forum is very worried about the situation in the country, and appeals to the highest organizations of the state to solve the students' demands urgently, appropriately, and with a high sense of responsibility to the people, to not imperil the lives of these young people who represent the country's future and to avoid other undesired incidents that could arise because of the distress of parents or the public. We are dismayed at the totally inadequate conditions under which this hunger strike is taking place. The necessary sanitation is not available. The Forum appeals to the entire public to make its contribution toward solving these serious problems. The Forum demands urgent measures to prevent any rash and unfair steps that could lead to undesired consequences for the achievement of democracy in Albania and our country's reputation in the world.

Education Ministry Issues Statement on Strike

AU1702151891 Tirana ATA in English 0910 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Announcement of the Ministry of Education; place and date not given]

[Text] Tirana, February 17 (ATA)—The spokesman of the Ministry of Education reports that the students of higher schools continued to boycott classes today, too.

As it is reported the students have boycotted classes on economic and political demands. Regarding the demands on school, they are as a whole positively answered by the Ministry and most of them are being solved, within the time limits set and decided together.

Concretely, the students of the Higher Agricultural Institute decided to resume classes. But seeing that the majority of students are for some days now in their families, and due to the weather difficulties, the spokesman of the Ministry of Education reported that it deemed it necessary that the lessons resume on February 25.

The same situation is presented also in the other higher schools. The rectorates are instructed to see to the inner possibilities or the prolongation of the school to compensate the hitherto losses and those announced.

The development of the lessons in normal conditions is impossible for the next week both for the other higher schools and for the University.

The education sections in the districts are as well announced to use their right to suspend lessons for 1 week in the 8-year and secondary schools depending on the weather conditions and especially seeing with priority the conditions in the schools with dormitory.

Nevertheless, the spokesman concluded, it will be announced in due time for any change to be made.

Release of Political Prisoners Demanded

AU1902214191 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 19 Feb 91

["Statement" by the Forum for the Defense of Human Rights issued on 18 February; place not given]

[Text] At a meeting with the interior minister on 12 February 1991, representatives of the Forum for the Defense of Human Rights once again presented the issue of the release of political prisoners. On the occasion, the Interior Ministry handed over to the Forum lists of the political prisoners released under decrees of the Presidium of the People's Assembly in 1990 and under the decree of 5 January 1991. The representatives of the Forum were also given the most recent list of 108 political prisoners released since 6 January 1991, whose release has not been reported to the public. While it expresses its pleasure that these measures directly help to defuse tensions and consolidate a healthy and normal situation in the weeks before the elections, the Forum has noticed that these measures are being taken slowly, especially in the case of the last contingent of 107 political prisoners, whose release is still held up by bureaucratic delays. The Forum considers the continued detention of these prisoners as totally irreconcilable with political pluralism, especially under the conditions of the electoral campaign. The Forum therefore calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners by accelerated procedures.

[Signed] Arben Puto, chairman. 18 February 1991.

15th PPSh Central Committee Plenum Communique

AU1902225491 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 2100 GMT 19 Feb 91

["Communique" of the 15th Albanian Workers' Party Central Committee Plenum in Tirana on 19 February]

[Text] The 15th Albanian Workers' Party [PPSh] Central Committee plenum, held to analyze the current political situation on 19 February 1991 under the chairmanship of Comrade Ramiz Alia, PPSh Central Committee first secretary, observes:

The time we are living is a historic turning point. Albania has conclusively embarked on the road of pluralist democracy, on the road of modern and civilized development. Parties have emerged, with whom the PPSh will conduct dialogue for the interests of the country, social progress, and freedom and independence. The PPSh, which took the initiative for this transformation, has every hope that this process in Albania will take place without pain. However, (?alas) for democratization, we are also encountering forces characterized by a spirit of extremism, which jeopardize public calm and order and the life and property of citizens.

1. We have lived free and sovereign in our country for almost 50 years. Power, in our case, has been and remains power of the people, and thus of the people's will. The question is clearly posed: Will we preserve or weaken Albania? The answer is: We will preserve and develop it. Will we overcome or add to the difficulties? The answer is: We will overcome them. Will we further continue the current process of democratization, or smother its infant breath? The answer is: We will develop it incessantly determinedly, without excesses. The PPSh is aware of its responsibility to the people and the country. It therefore calls on all political bodies, whether in opposition or not, and on patriots and honest people of the country to contribute with goodwill to preserve and strengthen political and economic stability, security, and normal conditions for working people's lives and work.

2. We are not responding to the unique economic situation with exceptional organization. This is not being properly carried out at the center and the base, by state services and economic bodies, where there are real difficulties, and where there are not. The party's economic program for the electoral campaign and the forthcoming legislature contains all the basic principles for the sure and fast advance of our economy. Therefore, alongside spreading propaganda about this campaign, we need a concrete commitment to its practical implementation.

3. This is a time when the party must raise its voice with all its strength, weight, and indisputable authority. This is demanded by political events, by every honest citizen, and by thousands of individuals and collectives who have voiced their views at meetings and in letters and telegrams addressed to the PPSh Central Committee. This call is addressed to us all; therefore, we must all rise to our feet. Communists, inspired by the teachings of Comrade Enver Hoxha, their lofty patriotic and moral duties, and their determination and indomitability when faced with every situation, must find new strength within themselves and the people, from whose bosom they emerged, to face all situations, however delicate and critical they may be.

4. The campaign for People's Assembly elections and victory in them represents a highly intensive political period, a test of the trust the people place in the PPSh. This great political action, so decisive for the future of the power of the people, demands that every communist and every basic party organization be vigorously militant in the bosom of the people, working with workers, cooperativists, young people, and intellectuals, so they may all use the election atmosphere to tighten unity and to democratize and strengthen the power of the people.

5. The PPSh has always been innovative. It has not only judged situations with realism and farsightedness, but is the initiator of the deep renewing and reforming processes in its own ranks and throughout Albania. It is the initiator of the new Constitution, struggles for a political system and a law-governed state under the conditions of pluralism, and insists on sincere, constructive, and democratic dialogue with all forces, etc.

All these and other democratizing measures can only be undertaken by a party that keeps abreast of the times, and that is aware of reality and confronts it. This process of renewal will be deepened first of all in the ranks of the party. The PPSh has long ago embarked on this process, considering it as natural as it is necessary. It will further strengthen this process at its next congress.

We therefore today demand more militancy, sacrifice, wisdom, and courage. We demand ties with the masses at work, at school, in families, and where people live and work. The PPSh Central Committee expresses its total conviction that communists, as always, by being the first to set an example, will be able to mobilize and correctly guide the working masses in this situation, which is as complicated as it is decisive for the destiny of the homeland.

Fifteenth PPSh Central Committee Plenum. Tirana, 19 February 1991.

Republican Party Branches Hold Conferences

Meetings Held in Tirana, Lushnje

AU1702152191 Tirana ATA in English 1050 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Tirana, February 16 (ATA)—The first conference of the branch of the Republican Party (RP) for Tirana was held at the seat of this party on February 15, afternoon.

The member of the Initiating Commission for the creation of this branch, Marin Karma said among the other things that work is the sole road to cope with the difficult economic situation. The Republican Party lays the alternative of gradual transition to the free market economy. It upholds that difficulties may be overcome through understanding and dialogue with the other political parties. Maksim Hajvari, chairman of the branch of the Republican Party for Tirana, speaking of the program of this party, said among the other things that we together will work to contribute to the lofty aim we have set to ourselves to lift our nation to new heights, for its cultural and political emancipation, to guarantee the freedoms and aspirations of people, for the economic progress of the country.

Sabri Godo, chairman of the Initiating Commission for the creation of the Republican Party, said among the other things that we are for the defence of the order. As an ancient and civilized people, he said, we should settle the problems and overcome the difficulties we are faced with through dialogue and debate, social peace, otherwise Europe will leave us on our fate. Likewise ,he repeated once again that as we decided on consensus, we should not stage strikes till May 1, to see all to the polls with social peace. Speaking of the student movement, he stressed once again the attitude of the Republican Party to solve the students' demands through a referendum. The Republican Party, he said, puts the interests of the people, the homeland, above everything.

The participants who took the floor backed up the program of the Republican Party.

The editor in chief of the newspaper "REPUBLIKA," Vangjush Gambeta, answering the questions of those present, said among the other things that the economic difficulties our country is undergoing can be coped with only through work, etc.

The first conference of the branch of the Republican Party of the City of Lushnje held its proceedings in the hall of cinema-theatre of this city.

The conference was opened by the member of the Initiating Commission of the branch of the RP of Lushnje, Themi Bello.

Speaking on the political program of the RP, the chairman of the Initiating Commission of this party's branch for Lushnje, Shpend Sollaku, said among other things that the RP commits itself for the protection of human rights, observing the declarations of UNO, Helsinki and Paris conferences. It powerfully supports the creation of the juridical state, it is for national reconciliation, the approval of a constitution, which guarantees freedom for all, for the policy of good neighbourliness, etc.

The member of the branch's Initiating Commission, Tasim Rakipi, spoke on the economic program of this party. He said among other things that work is the main source and basis to take the country out of the crisis, not excluding here the reception of credits from abroad. The RP, he said, will fight for the development of a multiform economy towards the gradual expansion and strengthening of the private property in the city and countryside, on which the people should decide themselves.

Likewise they spoke also on the application of the statute and on the program of the electoral campaign of this party. On behalf of the Initiating Commission for the creation of the RP, the conference was greeted by the member of this commission, Hysen Cobani, who stressed among others the democratic traditions of the people and said that the RP has committed itself to carry them ahead, to fight for the uplift of the people's well-being through work and cooperation with Europe as well as called for dialogue, wisdom and tolerance.

Attending the conference was also the chairman of the Initiating Commission for the creation of the RP, Sabri Godo, who answered some questions put by the participants. In the end the conference elected the leading council of the branch.

Further Meetings in Berat, Durres

AU1902161191 Tirana ATA in English 0945 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Tirana, February 18 (ATA)—The branch of the Republican Party [PRSh] in Berat organized its first

conference in the House of Culture "Margarita Tutulani." The chairman of the Initiating Commission of the Republican Party, Sabri Godo, underlined among others that the Republican Party is not for violence, it will not follow the way of demonstrations and rallies, but it is for meetings and open dialogue with the people so that to make public its program and listen to the opinions of the people.

Our party, he underlined, is for the identification of the dark forces, from which we dissociate. They might be the hand of foreigners. The Republican Party demands explanations of the economic situation of the country but at the same time it calls for cool-headedness and the unity of the nation, it is for the creation of a working government, of a presidential council led by Comrade Ramiz Alia, something which will lead us to free and quiet elections.

On occasion of the creation of the branch of the Republican Party for Durres, a meeting was organised with members and sympathizers of this party at the "Rinia" Palace of this city on February 18 afternoon.

The meeting was opened by the teacher Ylvi Agolli. The member of the Initiating Commission of the Republican party for Durres branch, Agim Shehi, said among others that the actual grave economic and social situation suggests for new political and economic directions of our country. The Republican Party, he said, aims to make Albania join Europe in a near future through the promotion of the processes of democratization and work of our people.

At the end, the floor was taken by the member of the Initiating Commission of the Republican Party, Agim Zeka, who underscored that the Republican Party will insist in the observation of human rights, the functioning of the juridical state, the defence and observation of the rights of national minorities, religious belief, etc. The Republican Party powerfully endorses all the students' demands, he said.

Changes in Radio's International Service Viewed

AU1802162291 Tirana BASHKIMI in Albanian 7 Feb 91 p 3

[Ilir Ikonomi article: "The Time of Propaganda Has Passed"]

[Text] Whoever listens to the broadcasts of Radio Tirana in foreign languages or in Albanian for our compatriots abroad cannot fail to realize that our information for foreign countries has changed! I say information, not to use the word "propaganda," which is connected more with the desire to impose an opinion than to shed light on reality before the eyes of the world. I would rather compare propaganda to a machine that makes a lot of noise. Alas for anyone who is not able to abandon propaganda and to deal with information today, in the age of information!

"Radio Tirana does little to fill the vacuum of information about Albania found in our media," the German author K.P. Mueller writes, not without a certain regret, in his 1983 book about the world's radio stations. However, harsh criticisms of Radio Tirana have not been heard from abroad for more than two years. A reform has been evident since two years ago, when the general reorganization of editorial boards began. It first affected the philosophy behind the broadcasts and the content of the programs for abroad, which meant a final break with schematicism and a reformulation of the way in which Albania would inform the world.

Of course, the bitter burden of the cold war had, among other things, forced many radio stations to involve themselves in missions that were not appropriate for them. The worst was that we used to strive to "inform" the world (usually in the form of "harsh" attacks) about what was happening "out there," even though many of those who wrote such things had never been abroad. Things are different today. Now, when one can confidently say that there is a smaller role for those radio stations that continue to conceive of the destabilization of a country as the highest aim of their work on the air waves, the journalists of Radio Tirana are realistically performing a mission that is fully within their capabilities: informing the foreign public accurately about Albania. Even the kings of the world's mass media have noticed the freshness of the information on the International Service: Prestigious newspapers and news agencies are increasingly citing the reports stemming from Radio Tirana, and they mention its name increasingly often. Practice shows that during times of reform and great change, radio broadcasts can become a highly importance point of reference for those who look for information straight from the source.

Recently, Radio Tirana has been subjected to further restructuring. The programs in Swedish, Persian, and Indonesian have been shut down, and the broadcasting time allocated to the languages of Eastern European countries has been significantly reduced. (As is evident, we had shouldered a very difficult task not only in speaking to others but doing so in their own languages!). On the other hand, starting last Thursday [31 January], broadcasts for Albanians outside the homeland were doubled, thus accomplishing a highly specific mission for our diaspora. There are in fact several million Albanians in Kosovo and beyond who have the right to be kept informed in their mother tongue, a right that has been denied to them in this Europe of modern communications. Because these broadcasts are widely heard on our territory also, we may remind readers that they include fresh reports on the events of the day, which at this time of democratization acquire special value, as well as programs for young people, variety programs with comedy and music, and telephone reports from our fellow Albanian reporters, etc. They will also show our great patriots in a new light, and will talk about the Albanians' territories that we think we know (but do we know them well?). There will also be a program for

children. With their six hours of medium-wave broadcasting, these broadcasts will become like a second program of Radio Tirana, and will thus add to the now pluralist structure of our media.

For our radio, democratization implies more openness. Unfortunately, it is not easy to break the molds we inherited from Eastern European experiences. For example, the process of democratization in Albania has stimulated debate to such an extent that a real upheaval has taken place in our domestic media. This great opportunity to get to know Albania, however, could be offered more extensively to our foreign listeners, who must understand what is happening: that the incipient process of democratization is irreversible.

At the time of the events at the embassies last July, the Western media portrayed Albania, which is not in Asia or Africa but on the European shores of the Mediterranean, as if it were a newly discovered country. We think that we deserved to be discovered much earlier, and thus learned that we ourselves should have filled the information gap a long time ago.

'Enver Hoxha' Voluntary Activists' Union Created

AU1902160491 Tirana ATA in English 0859 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Tirana, February 19 (ATA)—The newspaper "ZERI I POPULLIT" carries a message the "Enver Hoxha" Voluntary Activists' Union has addressed to Comrade Ramiz Alia, first secretary of the CC [Central Committee] of the PLA [Albanian Workers Party—PPSh] and chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the PSR [People's Socialist Republic] of Albania. It says among other things:

Representatives of 5,000 comrades from various districts of the country, who have expressed their free will to be untiring activists for the real ideals of democracy and the consolidation of stability in our beloved homeland, gathered in the 2,400-years historic city of Berat, decided the creation of this union and took the oath before the national flag.

The "Enver Hoxha" Voluntary Activists' Union is neither a new political party nor an association created to defend the interests of a certain party. Our union emerged in the tense days, when the people are demanding tranquility and stability, security for the present and future. We have joyfully welcomed the measures adopted by the PLA for a greater democratization, the pluralism of thought, so that everything serves the progress.

Albania's honour, the message says, depends on work and unity. We are of the opinion that there are some forces which are using the freedoms and rights of democracy not to stabilize the situation but to disturb it. The great ideal of democracy is inspiring us and we shall make our modest contribution to this ideal.

We call on all the honest Albanians, the political parties and independent organisations to fight for an honest strategic goal, for the present and future of the people, for their unity, proving that we are an ancient and cultured people, the message says. This message is written in the historic hall where the first democratic government of new Albania was created on October 22, 1944 and where the Antifascist National Liberation Council adopted the declaration for the defence of the citizens' rights.

Role of Army Under Pluralism Examined

AU1802193291 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 10 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed editorial: "Strengthening the Country's Defense—A Basic Task for Every Patriot"]

[Text] The decree of the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, "On Measures Necessary in Connection With Defining the Place and Role of the Army and the Internal Affairs Services and Justice Under the Conditions of Political Pluralism," opens new prospects for further strengthening the law-governed state and deepening democracy.

Communists and the entire population, as they learn of this decree, are all faced with a sacred duty to contribute to the fullest in strengthening the homeland's defense capability. Today, everyone must fully realize that the Armed Forces belong to and exclusively serve the homeland, and that they are guided by and act on the state's policies for the defense and security of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. Every sector of sociopolitical, cultural, and economic activity has its characteristic function. The Army in particular requires discipline, order, alertness, and intensive training. These are and must be permanent duties, and must be even further strengthened and improved. There can be no sure defense of the homeland without order, discipline, and alertness. The decree of the Presidium of the People's Assembly must be understood in this lofty spirit and with this sense of high patriotic responsibility.

Pluralism in our country will be reflected and have its consequences in the life of the Army, the services of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the justice services, but the members of our Armed Forces must always be trained in the spirit of patriotism and determination to defend the freedom and independence of the homeland and the inviolability and security of the interests of the homeland and the people. Pluralism will be reflected in the organization, life, and work of command bodies, staffs, and all other bodies. It will effect everybody from the ordinary private to the commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

Haste or hurry in studying this important decree cannot be tolerated in any way. It must be studied with great care, maturity, and sharp patriotic vigilance. The justice services have a special role in their work to study and draft the bills that are entrusted to them by the Council

of Ministers. In this study, they must totally commit themselves and their legal skills to tightening discipline, order, and increasing responsibility. Everyone's goal is and must be clear: Neither discipline, alertness, or military preparedness in the Army must be affected to the slightest degree. This is of special importance, especially today when the war in the Persian Gulf is taking place, with many incalculable aspects, when the situation in the Balkans is full of tension and elements of instability, and when even civil war is being talked about in neighboring Yugoslavia. The picture of today's situation is and must be clear to everybody. Lofty national interests demand that the Army should, as previously be in tight ranks, strong, and highly alert to defend at any moment the country's freedom and independence and the victories achieved by the people with so many sacrifices. The strengthening of democratic processes in the country implies that everybody, particularly our Armed Forces, will strengthen the homeland's defense. Without the freedom and independence of the homeland, there is no democracy, nor any question of democracy; therefore, everyone who works and strives to democratize the life of Albanian society must first make his own contribution to further strengthening the homeland's defense capability.

To demand reorganization, disorganization, structural changes, and new structures in the Army at such a time is the same as to demand a weakening of the homeland's defense. Political pluralism, which will be reflected in the Army as in all other fields, has and must be guided by a single principle: strengthening the country's defense. Our entire concentration and that of every patriotic citizen must today more than ever center upon this great citizen's mission: One cannot be a democrat and a fighter for democracy without first being a responsible and disciplined soldier, determined to defend Albania's freedom and independence. Much blood has been shed for this, and this has not been and cannot be forgotten. The roots of democracy, which all our society is committed to further deepening and making more genuine and effective, are in this blood.

Our Army is an army of the people in the people's service, whose aim is to defend the homeland's freedom, independence, and integrity. This duty must be performed and borne with maturity and responsibility, without diminishing but on the contrary reinforcing the country's defense capability through a rigorous and responsible enforcement of military discipline, raising military preparedness with intensive and high-quality training on both a small and large scale. In this way, the Army and all our Armed Forces will reaffirm the brilliant traditions they have created and inherited and will build on them. They will once again strongly affirm their lofty, freedom-loving, and democratic spirit and their exemplary devotion to the high interests of the homeland and the people.

Policy Toward Republic of Kosovo Examined

AU2002091491 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 9 Feb 91 p 3

[Kristaq Prifti article: "Pages From the Book, 'The Truth About Kosovo and the Albanians in Yugoslavia'"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The elimination by force of Kosovo's autonomy, subsequently enshrined in the Serbian Constitution of 28 September 1990, has placed its Albanian population in an extremely difficult situation. Kosovo undoubtedly also particularly suffers from the crisis which has enveloped the Yugoslav federation, and which has its origins in the unitarian and hegemonic aims of Serbia that seeks to turn Yugoslavia into a large Serbian state. Serbia has now defined, by violence and its Constitution, the position of Kosovo and the Albanians in the Serbian Republic and in the future organization of Yugoslavia. Borisav Jovic, president of the SFRY Presidency and Milosevic's right-hand Serb, also recently elucidated this standpoint when he opposed the determined demands of the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences for the recognition of the Republic of Kosovo and stated that the Albanians are now a minority in the Republic of Serbia, comprising only 14 percent of its population. Borisav Jovic is too hasty when he makes such calculations. The Albanians of Kosovo have still not had their final say on their own future.

In the complicated situation created by the Serbs, the Kosovo Democratic Alliance, other political and social organizations, and distinguished Albanian personalities have acted with prudence and patience, continuing to demand that Kosovo—in accordance with the general aspirations of its population—should be recognized as an entity independent of Serbia and a sovereign republic, and that 3 million Albanians, as the third-largest people in Yugoslavia, should have their own say in Yugoslavia's future organization. The Albanians see their organization in separate state units and in the Republic of Kosovo as a way to secure full sovereignty over their own territories, their full political and cultural affirmation, their identity as a nation, and their economic and social progress. Ibrahim Rugova, and Fehmi Agani, etc., the leaders of the Democratic Alliance, the distinguished Albanian academician Rexhep Qosja, and the writer Ramiz Kelmendi, aware of the complicated circumstances in which Serbia has placed Kosovo today, oppose any simplified interpretation of the Kosovo problem, and in recent interviews have continually emphasized that the Albanians will have to wage a long and difficult struggle to realize their aspirations.

As in the past, the problem of Kosovo is not simply an Albanian issue (although that is what it is in essence), nor an issue in Albanian-Yugoslav relations. The well-known sensitivity of public and official opinion in Europe and the world to Balkan issues in general, as well as the military and police violence imposed in Kosovo and the resistance of the Albanian population to it, have set the

Kosovo problem on the road toward internationalization. The European Parliament and the U.S. Congress and Senate (as also evident from the documents published in the book, "The Truth About Kosovo and the Albanians in Yugoslavia") have condemned the violence that Serbia has imposed on Kosovo, on the basis of the humanitarian principle of the protection of human rights. The protection of human rights in the province of Kosovo is inconceivable without securing national rights, without the recognition of the Albanians as independent of Serbia, and without their state organization in the Republic of Kosovo. The Albanians of Kosovo will not agree to enter the community of European peoples as an annex of Serbia or as an ordinary commune (even with the status of a separate territory) but only as a sovereign people equal to other peoples in Yugoslavia and Europe. The time has come for Europe, and not just Europe, to set aside medieval prejudices and myths about "Serbian Kosovo" and the so-called "historical rights" of Serbia to Kosovo, which support an outmoded, barbaric, and Byzantine policy that corresponds neither to the ethnic Albanian structure of Kosovo and other territories, nor to today's principle of nationality in the solution of national issues.

The Albanian nation has already once paid a "tax" for not belonging to Europe at the Ambassadors' Conference in London in 1913, when its territories were divided, became a "sacrificial lamb" on the altar of European peace, and were used as small change to establish equilibrium among large European states and appease their Balkan client-states. The Albanians will not permit a repetition of this tragic page in their history; they will not allow Kosovo to fall victim to the chauvinist appetite of Serbia, and will not pay another "tax" to Serbia and those who are unraveling the Yugoslav federation.

Regardless of nuances and tactical changes dictated by historical circumstances, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania has pursued a principled and consistent policy on our national cause, and has worked for the solution of the problem of Kosovo and the other Albanian areas on the basis of the principle of self-determination, which is also recognized by the UN Charter. The Albanian state has considered the national issue as a most complicated and acute political problem, tied not only to the relations of our country with neighboring states, but to the entire situation in the Balkans and even Europe. Nevertheless, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania has never allowed and will never in any way allow principles to be violated for the sake of good neighborly relations, or the legitimate rights of the Albanian population to be trampled underfoot. Comrade Ramiz Alia's determined and well-argued defense of the demands of the Albanians in Kosovo and all Yugoslavia for equal status with other nations and the free exercise of their rights to self-determination as recognized by the UN Charter, made at the 45th session of the UN General Assembly in September 1990, was quite legitimate and in line with the consistent policy pursued by the People's Socialist Republic of Albania on the question of Kosovo and other areas.

Under the conditions in which the Albanians of Kosovo now find themselves, confronted with the most savage enemies whose aim is to annihilate them as a people, it is the duty of all the patriotic forces of the Albanian people to reject any attempt to set Kosovo and its populace and the People's Socialist Republic of Albania against each other, and to work to further strengthen their reciprocal ties of trust, which assist the unity and future of the Albanian people.

Zhelev Meets Queen, Legislators in London

AU2002082491 Sofia BTA in English 2138 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] London, February 19 (BTA)—Bulgarian President Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev was received by Queen Elizabeth II. It is the first time the queen has received a Bulgarian head of state since her meeting with former Bulgarian King Boris III. The talks lasted 15 minutes more than scheduled. Elizabeth II inquired about the situation in Bulgaria, the way the reforms are being implemented and the legislative proceedings of the Grand National Assembly. Asked about the meetings and talks he held in Britain, Dr. Zhelev told the queen he was extremely satisfied.

The queen's husband, Prince Philip, duke of Edinburgh, showed interest in the environmental situation in Bulgaria and in taking possible measures to improve it.

The queen thanked Dr. Zhelev for his invitation to visit Bulgaria.

Elizabeth II gave a dinner in honour of Dr. Zhelev and his wife.

Today Dr. Zhelev visited the British Parliament and had talks with members of the Interparliamentary Group.

Former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher had a meeting with President Zhelev at the Claridge's Hotel. "It was a warm meeting between old acquaintances," said the president's spokesman.

Mrs. Thatcher approved of Bulgaria's recent reforms, democratic changes and efforts to establish a free market economy. "Your strategy is right and you will succeed," Mrs. Thatcher said. "In a year and a half Bulgaria will be turned into a modern country."

Today the Bulgarian delegation had meetings with prominent businessmen and experts from the Confederation of British Industry.

Dr. Zhelev said that the losses inflicted by the disintegration of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Persian Gulf war amount to 10 per cent of Bulgaria's gross domestic product.

"Of crucial importance for Bulgaria is the expected financial aid from the G-24. We rely on Britain's active help to be granted this aid," Dr. Zhelev said.

Bulgaria will do everything to attract much needed foreign investment. We know that foreign capital will only start flowing in Bulgaria if the economic situation in the country is stabilized and appropriate legislation is adopted. However, this can be achieved only through the experience and cooperation of Western businessmen. That is why I would like to appeal to this audience of distinguished British businessmen for a new start in our economic relations," the Bulgarian president said.

In the end Dr. Zhelev said that Bulgaria would greatly benefit from a future incorporation into the initiative undertaken by the Confederation of British Industry for providing assistance to young democracies in Central and Eastern Europe.

Today Bulgaria's Foreign Minister Mr. Viktor Vulkov met the secretary general of the Western European Union (WEU) Mr. Willem van Eekelen. The two discussed possible cooperation between Bulgaria and the WEU.

Mr. Van Eekelen inquired about Bulgaria's stand on the problems of security in the Balkans. Mr. Vulkov said our country was now seeking safeguards for its security within the framework of the comprehensive system for European security, in the system of the European institutions.

Mr. Van Eekelen accepted Mr. Vulkov's invitation to visit Bulgaria.

The British ambassador in Sofia, Mr. Richard Thomas, who was also present at the meeting, said that Foreign Office had allotted 10,000 pounds from its funds for a humanitarian aid to Bulgaria.

BSP Protests Against 'Persecuting' Socialists

AU2002100891 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 15 Feb 91 p 1

[Declaration of the BSP Supreme Council Presidium; place and date not given]

[Text] Recently, the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] began a campaign of persecuting Socialists because of their political beliefs. The campaign is coordinated at both the national and local levels. The position of the SDS Coordinating Council of 11 February, expressed in the declaration "About Certain Cadre Peculiarities in Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Leading Personnel," is a component of this campaign, which enhances social tension. It represents direct interference in the government's work, prompted by political-ideological, rather than professional considerations. It contradicts the political forces' agreement, the Law on Depoliticization, and the changes in the Penal Code, recently adopted by the Grand National Assembly.

Examples of a similar approach also exist in other ministries and departments, the higher educational establishments, and the provisional executive committees. The attempts to revoke and violate Decree No. 57 of the Council of Ministers represent an attempt to conduct a purge of Socialists in the oblast and municipal people's councils, and thus block the work of the local administration services.

In all cases the criteria on whose basis it was decided whether the employees, scientific workers, aides, and so forth, will remain or whether they will be relieved of their post, were based on the well-known party approach, rather than on the people's professional and personal

qualities! It is ironic, but precisely the people who insisted that political motives should not play a role in assessing cadres are now led by political motives.

Slander, discrediting, psychological pressure, and overt blackmail are used in this campaign. Unscrupulous acts are committed while the regulations of the Labor Code, normative documents, and the positions of the trade unions are violated with impunity.

Thus the SDS is introducing new elements of confrontation in the country's political life, precisely when the country needs calm and unity.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] thinks that professionalism and adherence to the country's national interests must be the sole criteria for occupying an official post.

The Presidium of the BSP Supreme Council demands that the citizens' dignity, regardless of their political preferences, is protected, and will continue to work for this goal within the framework of the democratic institutions.

BSP Asserts SDS Facing Ideological Crisis

AU1902222191 Sofia BTA in English 2018 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—According to the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) is resorting to the "enemy without" myths to cover up its deep ideological and organizational crisis. The BSP considers that the SDS attacks on the Socialists have become more frequent of late because the SDS has not a comprehensive program for overcoming the crisis. Now Bulgaria's Government includes representatives of the BSP, the SDS and the Bulgarian Agrarian Party (BZNS).

At today's press conference, top socialist officials said that the leadership of the SDS is repeating the blunders of the communist nomenklatura and that it is gradually taken over by irresponsible careerists.

Mr. Filip Bokov familiarized the journalists with the stand of the BSP Supreme Council and said that the BSP stands nothing to gain from paralyzing the work of parliament and the implementation of the political forces' agreement. The political stagnation in the country should be blamed on the SDS.

Mr. Bliznashki, leader of the Sofia branch of the BSP, said that 68,666 members of the party had re-registered. Their number before November 10, 1989 was 160,000.

Mr. Bliznashki protested against the activities of the interim municipal administration which, according to him, exceed their rights. He pressed for local elections to be held the soonest possible.

BSP Predicts Foreign Ministry Confrontation

AU1902145091 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 13 Feb 91 p 1

[Dora Chichkova report]

[Excerpts] Chavdar Kyuranov stated at the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] news conference that a social solution to the problem of interest rates on old loans could be found. He suggested that the government should consider different rates of interest for pensioners, young families, and other socially disadvantaged categories. The deputy chairman of the BSP Supreme Council added that the BSP will continue to support the reform, but will place the accent on its social price and the acceptability of the social effects that it causes. [passage omitted]

The Socialists also see signs of a new confrontation in the decision of the Coordinating Council of the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] in connection with the cadres of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Filip Bokov considered that this marks the start of a campaign of persecuting Socialists and described it as a "witch hunt."

Many cadres associated with the totalitarian regime were already deselected by Lukanov's government, Bokov added. Regarding the assertion that some specialists in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took part in the BSP election campaign, he saw nothing criminal in this. "What are we then to say about Ognyan Pishev?" Kyuranov asked. The deputy chairman of the BSP Supreme Council stated that the BSP leadership will not defend a single diplomat or ambassador connected with the so-called "revival process." [passage omitted]

Interior Minister Danov on Ministry Restructuring

AU1902155491 Sofia ANTENI in Bulgarian No. 7 13 Feb 91 p 5

[Interview with Internal Affairs Minister Khristo Danov by Yasen Georgiev; place and date not given: "'Police State' Without Policemen"]

[Excerpts] [Georgiev] Mr. Danov, the question we cannot overlook is what is happening with the notorious restructuring of the Ministry of Internal Affairs?

[Danov] We have a very specific and clear scheme of the ministry's restructuring, in an attempt to turn it into a modern and popular institution of a democratic and constitutional state. For this purpose the structures which functioned until now, began to change. Every separate function of the security services is already a specific system of activities. We must regroup them now into judicial entities. Now we have the police, National Service for the Protection of the Constitution; Department for Struggle Against Organized Crime, Drug Trafficing, and Weapons' Smuggling; Fire Brigade; Border Troops; Internal Troops; and an Anti-Terrorism Department. Each of those functionally separate units has its own command, and reports directly to the minister.

Their vertical structure conforms the territorial division of the country. Thus the regional police directorates are subordinate to the country's Police Directorate. All this will be further connected with the future territorial restructuring of the country. [passage omitted]

[Georgiev] DEMOKRATSIYA asked again whether political leaders and movements are bugged.

[Danov] I would like to point out again that there is nothing like that. I personally checked this matter very thoroughly. This applies not only to the rooms on Rakovski Street [the headquarters of the Union of Democratic Forces], but to all. The story of the humming or cracking telephones is ridiculous. As far as I know, a crystal-clear reception is required for bugging, and such reception cannot be provided by the obsolete communication equipment. [passage omitted]

[Georgiev] Do you have information about possible terrorist acts in our country?

[Danov] There is a lot of such information, and we are investigating it. Until now all tip-offs proved false, but this does not diminish our alert. We cooperate with many foreign intelligence centers. What we cannot obtain through our channels we get from abroad, including the CIA, the Mossad Intelligence Service, and all those who can provide us with information. We cannot complain about the cooperation with those organizations, and I suppose that they also are satisfied with us. Diplomats often express gratitude for the efficient organization of such relations.

Poll Indicates Preference for May Elections

AU1502205491 Sofia BTA in English 1657 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 15 (BTA)—The parliamentary elections should be held in May, as scheduled in the agreement signed by the political forces, according to a poll conducted by BTA provincial correspondents. The 480 respondents come right across the age and social-status spectrum. Two hundred and eight of them think the elections should be held on schedule, 155 prefer the Autumn, and 45 express no opinion.

Asked which political force would win if the elections were held now, 251 picked the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), 159 opted for the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), and 13 for the Bulgarian Agrarian Party (BZNS). Of the remaining 67 respondents, 27 predict that the SDS and the BSP would draw level, eight are categorical that none of the two forces will be able to form a one-party cabinet, and four say that neither party deserves to win. The rest either have no opinion or say they are not going to vote. The majority of the respondents, 209, back up the majority decision system, 142 favor a mixed system, and 121 support the proportional representation system.

According to the poll, the SDS will collect 37.4 per cent of the vote, the BSP 32.1 per cent and the BZNS 12.4. People believe the Movement For Rights and Freedoms will retain its 23 seats in parliament. Some of the respondents believe that under these economic circumstances the entry of the business parties in the election campaign will lead to a shift in the correlation of forces. Others say that the possible unification of the BZNS and the Nikola Petkov BZNS would raise the new party's rating and it would come closer to the SDS and the BSP.

Aide Says Zhivkov-Gorbachev Relations Cold

AU1702195491 Sofia BTA in English 1826 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 17 (BTA)—More light has been thrown recently on the details of the relations between the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Bulgaria's ex-No. 1 Todor Zhivkov, now prisoner at the bar. They are now seen in different colors.

On February 13, summoned as a witness at the trial against the ex-Minister of Economy Stoyan Ovcharov, Zhivkov said he had been "called to the Soviet Union and rebuked personally by Gorbachev for having swinged towards the West". He was "called" because of the decision of the former Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party to send Bulgarian students abroad.

Two days later Zhivkov confirmed this statement in an interview with AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE and spoke of a secret decision for opening Bulgaria to the West, without indicating the time when it had been taken. As he said in court, however, some "traitors" turned up who told the USSR all about it, Gorbachev demanded explanation and defined Bulgaria's pro-Western orientation and its attempts to turn into a mini-Japan or a mini-FRG as "wicked and wrong".

In the same interview Zhivkov confirms the authenticity of the shorthand record of his talks with Gorbachev on October 16, 1987 in the Kremlin, which was published in Kostadin Chakurov's book "The Second Floor" (Mr. Chakurov had been one of the advisers of Zhivkov and his daughter Lyudmila for years). Fragments of the book came out last year, a couple of months ago it was published in an abridged version, but the full text came out only recently in a moderate total print of 25,000. The record of the Zhivkov-Gorbachev meeting is only in the full version. Its authenticity was confirmed for the first time only now, in the interview for AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE on February 14.

At this meeting in the Kremlin on October 16, 1987, Zhivkov speaks much of the "separation of the legislative and the executive power in Bulgaria", of "new functions of the parliament", of "gaining command of the market by economic means", of "attempts to replace the administrative centralization by an economic one",

of "drastic cuts of the bureaucratic apparatus", and of "desire for changes in the legal superstructure and in the intellectual sphere".

Gorbachev's reaction was harsh. "Revolution is not a thing you can trifle with," he says. He starts criticizing Zhivkov's methods: "We cannot break everything old with one blow. Our strategy is provided for a long period of history". Gorbachev shows serious concern: "How can one operate the perestroyka without a wide discussion, both at the center and on a local level without changing everything all of a sudden." And if it turns to be a failure, everybody would say: "There, they copy the Soviet Union."

Several times during the conversation Gorbachev shows dissatisfaction with Zhivkov's statement that the Communist Party would not be the chief subject of power. According to Gorbachev, it was possible to change only the methods and the accents when delimiting the functions of the party and the state.

We want Bulgaria and the Soviet Union to grow closer as a result of the perestroyka, Gorbachev says and adds at once the information he already had: In Zhivkov's surroundings there were people striving to turn Bulgaria into a mini-Japan or a mini-FRG. We are bothered by such discussions and attitudes, he points out.

Zhivkov immediately tries to tone down his bold intentions. He explains that the cuts will not take the political confidence off the party cadres and they are sure to keep their privileges.

Mr. Chakurov, Zhivkov's adviser, points out several times in his book that the ex-No. 1 "could not stand some individuals in high posts who pursued their own policy at the expense of the national interests and supplied Moscow with important information." Not a single name was mentioned. "We had some subtle cases and Zhivkov was unable to send the mighty units of state security to shadow these people," Chakurov writes.

In "The Second Floor" there is a paragraph about Zhivkov's ambitions at the time when Gorbachev came to power in 1985. He then decided to speak up for the re-organization of the economic system; he used to have great plans. He sent Gorbachev a letter in which he speaks of the apparatus and the reproductive stratum whose interests and privileges are affected by any reform program. He writes of the necessity for changes, for the revival of people's confidence in law; he adds, however, that "the protest is not aimed against socialism". Even then, in 1985, Gorbachev's reaction was harsh. According to Mr. Chakurov, he gave an inkling that he would not let himself be lectured.

The Soviet perestroyka got underway but Zhivkov used to tell his close associates that there is too much talking and no serious action there, Chakurov writes. He declared several times in public that the Soviet perestroyka was "mess" (meaning chaos and disorder).

Long before Zhivkov's downfall there were talks in Bulgaria that his relations with Gorbachev had grown cold. Chakurov's book hints that they had never been really close and the reason was not in Zhivkov's conservative attitude.

It is certainly hard to judge the objectiveness of Mr. Chakurov and the reliability of his book.

In the week when Zhivkov twice declared he had been reproved by the Kremlin for his attempts for pro-Western orientation, information came from Moscow about a letter he recently sent to Gorby by ordinary mail. It expresses his sincere regret that after the 10th of November 1989 when he was unseated he was unable to assure Gorbachev of his great respect for him. True to his manner of quibbling and double-dealing, he congratulates Gorbachev on the occasion of his Nobel Peace Prize and expresses his conviction that "history will judge his efforts for disarmament by their merits".

The trial against Zhivkov starts February 25 and it may reveal new details of the Gorbachev-Zhivkov relations and more information about the Soviet president's attitude towards Bulgaria and other East European countries in the period 1985-1989.

Zhivkov's Surreptious Police Contacts Explored

AU1902183591 Sofia BTA in English 1752 GMT 19 Feb 91

["Zhivkov Accused of Being Provocateur"—BTA headline]

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—Immediately after November 10, 1989, when Todor Zhivkov was removed from power, the press brought out publications alleging that Todor Zhivkov had been a police plant before September 9, 1944.

Prominent jurists believe that this issue will be raised again at the trial against the country's former No. 1 due to be opened next Monday. Another problem that is sure to be brought up is Zhivkov's acquaintance with an ex-top police official Nikola Geshev, who, according to unofficial data, controlled almost two-thirds of the communist leadership before 1944.

At the preliminary investigation Zhivkov told about his contacts with Geshev on his own initiative. The former No. 1 had never mentioned it to anybody before, except to his adviser, Mr. Kostadin Chakurov, who wrote about it in his book "The Second Floor" that has been recently published in only 25,000 copies.

It is still unknown what Geshev's fate was after 1944. Mr. Chakurov suggests that the police chief was in contact with the British Secret Intelligence Service and managed to escape via Turkey. The abundant information Geshev had about provocateurs and informants implanted in the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) went to a double agent most probably Kim Philby, and then to the KGB. That is why, Mr. Chakurov explains in

his book, in the first years of the communist regime Stalin ordered to discontinue the activity of the commissions investigating the provocateurs and informants implanted in the BCP. "There are other facts as well, but I do not think the time has come for their being disclosed," Mr. Chakurov said.

The Zhivkov-Geshev connection is likely to surface for yet another reason. Zhivkov's long-time aide Mircho Spasov—a key figure in the former Security Services—who was also in charge of the socialist forced labour camps, is also accused of having been a provocateur, but the charges against him are not officially proved. It is a fact that after 1944 Todor Zhivkov and Mircho Spasov handled the police archives.

In "The Second Floor" Mr. Chakurov says that when Zhivkov learnt about Spasov's involvement in the 1973 affair in which dummies were used to divert funds, Zhivkov did not dare to remove Spasov from his high position immediately. In the end he made him head of department in the BCP Central Committee.

Since Todor Zhivkov is to be tried on charges of misappropriation of public funds, and Spasov had control over Bulgaria's foreign policy for a long time, jurists believe that the Geshev-Spasov-Zhivkov triangular will surely come to light. They think that the police infiltration into the BCP will be unraveled too, though not as a central issue.

Split in 'Marxist Alternative' Movement Reported

AU1902092491 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 10 Feb 91 p 2

[Dora Kostadinova report: "Another Fourth Conference of 'Marxist Alternative'"]

[Text] The split in the "Marxist Alternative" Movement is a result of the clash between dogmatic and creative Marxism—this is the conclusion of the Fourth National Conference of the movement, which took place on 9 February in Sofia. It reaffirmed confidence in Prof. Mitryu Yankov and reelected him chairman of the Coordinating Council.

A coordinating council elected three weeks ago by another conference that also called itself the Fourth National Conference, and convened by an "initiative group," also claims to be the legitimate leadership of the "Marxist Alternative" Movement.

The conference that took place on 9 February declared that the other conference was a "gathering of people who do not belong to the movement," and that its decisions were invalid. The fractional activity of the "initiative group" was denounced. According to the conference's resolution, the group "strives to ban the creative development of the Marxist theory and replace it by constant repetition of obsolete slogans." The change in the leadership of MISUL [THOUGHT] newspaper was confirmed.

An attempt has been to use the name of "Marxist Alternative" to create another movement with different program and goals, which will merge with the radical conservative and sectarian-dogmatic "Marxist Platform for Unity and Renewal of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP]," which remains captive to the ideological stereotypes of the 1950's and 1960's, Yankov said. According to statements made at the conference, those actions have been initiated by several active fighters against fascism and capitalism, interested in restoring the previous status of the party in Bulgarian society.

Specific accusations were directed at Rumyana Modeva, Georgi Svezhin, Ivan Vrachev, Mikhail Radonov, and Stoil Karatanchev. Speculating with popular slogans such as "Loyalty to ideals," and "Unity of leftist forces," those people used typical nomenklatura methods in an attempt to demolish the movement's leadership and seize its financial resources and the MISUL newspaper, the resolution reads.

The conference confirmed the decision of the Executive Bureau to seize the prerogatives of Rumyana Modeva as representative of the "Marxist Alternative" at the BSP Presidium.

The "Marxist Alternative" views its role in the BSP as a strong intellectual circle, which makes theoretical-political assessments and analysis and proposes alternative political solutions.

Tomov Meets Mezdra BSP Members, Supporters

AU1902092291 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 10 Feb 91 p 2

[Iliya Borisov report: "BSP Has Its Structures Throughout Country, Aleksandur Tomov Says"]

[Text] Mezdra, 9 February—The Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] has its structures throughout the country, Aleksandur Tomov, deputy chairman of the BSP Supreme Council and deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, said on 9 February in Mezdra at a meeting at the Club of Railroad Workers. The meeting was attended not only by BSP members, but also by many citizens and supporters.

In his speech the speaker touched upon many topical issues related to the party's activity and its renewal. He spoke in detail about the economic reform. Tomov said, "We are Bulgarians, and we must live together, regardless of our political inclinations. The BSP supports the democratic changes and understands very well that there is no single political force that could lead the country toward the desired democracy. In the complex process of price liberalization and creating a market economy the BSP must think about the people and support the socially deprived strata of the population."

Issues related to the new Land Law, cooperative farms, privatization, and so forth, were critically discussed at the meeting.

Some 2,710 people have reregistred in the BSP Mezdra Municipal Organization. They represent 71 percent of the BSP membership in 1990.

Defense Minister Mutafchiev on Army's Future

AU1902125191 Sofia NARODNA ARMIYA in Bulgarian 12 Feb 91 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Defense Minister Colonel General Yordan Mutafchiev by Colonel Ivan Ganchev; place and date not given: "I Believe in the People's Strength and Abilities"]

[Excerpts] [Ganchev] Mr. Colonel General, this is the second cabinet of which you are a member and the first multiparty government that has been established. Is it easy to be a minister these days?

[Mutafchiev] Hardly anyone has an easy life in Bulgaria today. Being a minister in the Popov cabinet is not only difficult, it involves a tremendous responsibility before the people in trying to rescue the country from the current crisis. Solutions that cannot always be correctly understood and realized, unpopular solutions, which are nevertheless of great importance for Bulgaria's future, are needed today.

The mass media are extensively reporting on the problems that the other ministers are currently forced to cope with. Naturally, the complicated situation prevailing in our country directly and indirectly affects the Bulgarian People's Army, because we cannot remain isolated from the whole system. Crucial problems are related to defense, to the organization, and development of the army. The problems are complicated and especially connected with the training, combat readiness, and mobilization of troops, with structural, and personnel changes currently under way.

The process of the army's depoliticization was also painful. Problems related to material-technical and auxiliary supplies have emerged. The approval of the country's defense budget is under way, and social problems have increased considerably. Additional difficulties resulted from the delay in adopting the military legislation. [passage omitted] As you see, it not easy to be a minister today.

[Ganchev] Do your government colleagues react with understanding in dealing with questions of the country's defense and the needs of the army?

[Mutafchiev] The government shows understanding for the problems of the army. There is also a positive attitude toward cooperation. [passage omitted] Bulgaria's national security is a nationwide cause and I think that the government is well aware of this fact. Nevertheless, I would like to express my concern about certain incompetent interpretations and ideas on the need for an army, about military structures and tasks, about the efforts of certain administrative departments to free themselves of structures related to the country's defense and that serve the interests of national security. Such actions, to a certain extent, divert attention from the fundamental tasks of the army. The fact that such structures should also be restricted to the limit of reasonable sufficiency is another question and I would principally agree with such arguments. [passage omitted]

[Ganchev] At a meeting with journalists you stated that you are expecting difficulties in recruiting army personnel for 1991, as a result of the introduction of an 18-months conscription service and of new structures in military life. According to certain data, about 6,000 prospective conscripts have already left the country together with their parents. If this is true, how was it allowed to occur, and who is responsible for such a state of affairs?

[Mutafchiev] As a matter of fact, the reduction of the term of conscription from 24 to 18 months resulted in a 25 percent reduction of opportunities for the recruitment of conscripts for the army. Despite the fact that, according to a special Council of Ministers decree the limit of military personnel serving in other ministries and departments was considerably reduced, the number of current conscripts cannot guarantee the full complement of the units.

The main reason for this is the progressive drop in the country's birth rate since the sixties. Unfortunately the trend still persists. It is true that approximately 3,500 young people born in 1972 failed to appear before the conscription commission to join the armed forces. They are currently abroad.

As far as your question is concerned, I would like to explain that, in accordance with Article 196 of the Law on the Armed Forces in the Republic of Bulgaria, all Bulgarian citizens over the age of 17 are not entitled to leave the country before they have accomplished their military service. A Law on Amendments and Addenda to the Law on Foreign Travel Passports was adopted on 11 May 1989. According to Article 1, all Bulgarian citizens who are in the possession of a Bulgarian travel passport are entitled to leave the country and return whenever they wish.

Article 7 of the aforementioned Law stipulates who is entitled to a foreign travel passport, but no restrictions are provided for youths who have not served in the army. Article 8, Paragraph 3 of the Code of Regulations for the application of the law stipulates that youths over the age of 17 are requested to submit a certificate issued by the relevant military authorities. To obtain such a certificate authorizing them to go abroad, the youths are expected to sign a declaration committing themselves to appear before a conscription commission in case they are summoned to the barracks. Actually, however, they obtain their foreign travel passport and leave for good.

[Ganchev] Do you think that legal action should be taken against such youths in case of their return?

[Mutafchiev] I think that there are no reasons for such actions, despite the fact that the failure to appear before a drafting commission in the army is considered a legal offense and that, according to Article 126 of the Law on the Armed Forces, on the basis of the Penal Code, draft dodgers are subject to prison sentences for a period of up to three years. I am convinced that an effective control mechanism should be introduced in this respect and legislation should be improved.

[Ganchev] Do you envisage any new structural and organizational changes likely to require personnel cuts for the officers' staff? Various rumors are circulating on this subject. I would like you to clarify the question of future plans concerning officers' retirement age?

[Mutafchiev] I have already expressed my opinions on this question on several occasions, considering that this question has been often manipulated to create tension. As a result of adopting a new military doctrine based on defense and as a result of the negotiations on conventional weapons in Europe, the Bulgarian People's Army is undergoing a reorganizational process that will reduce its staff as follows: Officers—by 14.3 percent; sergeants—by 6.4 percent; and soldiers—by 22 percent. [passage omitted]

The question of pensioning army personnel has always been an issue of particular concern for the Ministry of Defense leadership. The fact that certain compromises were admitted in this respect is another question. The bill on the Armed Forces that we have submitted specifies the following age limits for officers' retirment:

1. For the ranks from junior lieutenant to captain the age limit is 45 years.

2. For majors and lieutenant colonels the age limit is 55 years.

3. For colonels the age limit is 55 years.

4. For major generals and lieutenant generals the age limit is 62 years.

5. For colonel generals the age limit is 65 years. [passage omitted]

[Ganchev] Minister, for many years the social problems of military personnel were a taboo subject that was neither discussed nor written about. Recently, things have radically changed. Could you tell our readers what has been done so far in this respect and what the Ministry of Defense leadership intends to do on this matter, especially regarding the housing question?

[Mutafchiev] I would not say that the social problems of military personnel were neither discussed, nor written about in the past. One can hardly compare the urgency and manner of raising this question today and in the past. The new situation in the country and the fact that some of the problems were not effectively and justly resolved as they should have been led to their further exacerbation. [passage omitted]

A total of 30,000 housing units for military personnel are announced for sale in 1991. Approximately 12,000 housing units will remain free for the needs of combat readiness in the garrison at the disposal of the commanders. Otherwise the young officers and sergeants who are graduating from military school and departing for units will hold us responsible. We adopted specific measures for accelerating the sale of apartments. [passage omitted]

I would like to point out that a great deal has been accomplished toward the solution of military personnel's social problems. Naturally, all questions have not been resolved, but we should take the existing economic conditions into consideration and realize that we should not make unrealistic claims that usually obstruct rather than contribute to the accelerated settlement of problems.

[Ganchev] You openly admitted in a briefing with Sofia journalists that the majority of young people have a negative attitude toward military service. It is no secret that living conditions in numerous military units are considerably below the average standard. Has the government a definite position on this question?

[Mutafchiev] I do not agree with your statement that the negative attitude of part of our youth to the military service is merely related to the unsatisfactory living conditions in some units. Things are much more complicated and demand a thorough analysis.

The government has a position on living conditions in the barracks. As a member of the government I am concerned about the situation and I must strive for an improvement by trying to persuade everyone that the living conditions in question affect their own sons. [passage omitted]

[Ganchev] Unfortunately, the concept of a "soldiers' black market" has recently emerged. A soldier who manages to purchase some jars of sour milk, or some cigarettes in the canteen sells them to his comrades at the three, or four times higher price. How can this be stopped?

[Mutafchiev] The army is a living organism, and cases of military black mareketeers cannot be excluded. It is difficult to isolate ourselves from the current trends in society. We are obliged to examine conditions and to analyze the causes of such actions and the motivations of those who commit them. We should certainaly react, because I consider such activities abnormal. I am convinced that our commanders are sufficiently trained and morally fit to stop such actions. [passage omitted]

[Ganchev] What is your personal opinion on the following question: Why is it that irrespective of the recent depoliticization in the army, certain political circles in the government and outside the National Assembly stubbornly insist on the appointment of a civilian to the post of defense minister?

[Mutafchiev] Throughout our army's history there have been no such traditions, we had a civilian defense minister only for a short period. Personally, I do not object to this demand if it is in the interest of national security and not based on political considerations. [passage omitted].

Turkish Defense Officials Arrive for Talks

AU1902221991 Sofia BTA in English 2041 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February (BTA)—The Ministry of Defense has announced that a working group of staff generals and officers of the Turkish Armed Forces, led by General Mehmet Onder [spelling as received], first deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff, arrived on a visit to Bulgaria

The Bulgarian working group is led by Lieutenant [General] Lyuben Petrov, first deputy chief of the General Staff of the Bulgarian Army.

The two sides discussed some practical questions related to the implementation of the Paris summit resolutions and the measures for strengthening security and mutual trust. The Turkish delegation had also talks with Colonel General Radnyu Minchev, chief of the General Staff of the Bulgarian Army, and discussed some problems of the two countries' military cooperation, the promotion of good neighborly relations and the countries' stand on the Persian Gulf crisis.

There has not been such a meeting on Bulgarian territory since 1923. This explains the interest of the guests in what they saw during their visit to the Bulgarian Academy of Military Medicine and to a military unit.

Reportage on Continuing Unrest in Kurdzhali

Tensions Remain on Turkish Classes

AU2002082191 Sofia BTA in English 2125 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—The government and the main political forces issued an appeal for re-establishing public peace in the town of Kurdzhali (southern Bulgaria) where there were demonstrations against the introduction of Turkish as an optional subject. The appeal, signed by parliamentary and government leaders, by the vice president, leaders of political parties and coalitions, says that no pressure on government authorities should be tolerated and that the protests against constitutional rights undermine the democratic process.

Today in the mixed population region of Kurdzhali parents did not let their children go to school and some teachers also stayed away. According to the government appeal the schools are under undue pressure.

The local correspondents reported that the local administration was urged to resign and the representatives of the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) gave in because "the situation in the town had gone out of control and because they feared the worst might happen." At their meeting today parliamentary officials and representatives of the local authorities said that legal action would be taken against those who try to interfere with the work of the local administration.

There were similar demonstrations in the town of Razgrad (northern Bulgaria). The "Vuzrazhdane" Youth Patriotic Union was ready to go on effective strike in support of the "defenders of the Bulgarian national spirit" in Kurdzhali.

On the other hand, in certain parts of the country school classes were boycotted by children from Muslim families. Some of them who profess Islam but are not Turks demanded the introduction of Turkish as an optional subject, while others, from Turkish families, demand the introduction of compulsory Turkish language classes in areas where the population is predominantly of ethnic Turkish origin.

Mayor, BSP Council Members Resign

AU1902111891 Sofia Domestic Service in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The members of the provisional administration of Kurdzhali Municipality, led by Milan Milanov, chairman of the Provisional Executive Committee, and representatives of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP], have resigned.

This happened late last night under pressure from citizens who organized a protest rally against the decision to introduce the teaching of Turkish in Bulgarian schools on an experimental basis.

The answer to the question whether Kurdzhali Municipality will be left as of today without a provisional administration until a new one is appointed depends on Council Of Ministers Chariman Dimitur Popov. Provisional Executive Committee Chariman Milan Milanov, Deputy Chairman Ivaylo Georgiev, and Secretary Khristo Karamanolov left today for Sofia to hold talks with the prime minister.

Correspondents report that the situation in Kurdzhali continues to be complex. Classes continue to be paralyzed because of the occupation of school buildings.

Schools Still Closed in District

AU1902131891 Sofia BTA in English 1225 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—After yesterday's appeal of the Council of Ministers, today there are no classes in 65 of the 335 schools in the former district of Kurdzhali, the regional education department reported. No classes have been held at the 17 schools in the town of Kurdzhali. Only one of the 18 schools in the Momchilgrad area, in Momchilgrad itself, has held classes

today. Though not attended by all schoolchildren, all schools are working in the Municipality of Chernoochene. The situation in the municipalities of Dzhebel and Kirkovo is alarming. No classes have been held at the 26 schools there.

Following the instructions of the Council of Ministers, this morning the regional directorate of the Ministry of the Interior started talks with the parents' initiative committees which have blocked the big secondary and technical schools in Kurdzhali.

The BTA office in Kurdzhali received a declaration of the schoolchildren's committees of several schools. It says that the parents' committees' sit-ins have disturbed the classes in the schools of Kurdzhali and insists that the prosecutor's office and the regional directorate of the Ministry of the Interior secure free access to the schools for those willing to attend the classes.

Silistra Protest Against Classes

AU2002113391 Sofia Domestic Service in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] In Silistra this morning, sympathizers and supporters of the Bulgarian National Union, which has its headquarters in Silistra, and the Bulgarian National Radical Party organized a protest action at the Yuriy Gagarin Sports Grammar School against the teaching of Turkish in Bulgarian schools.

During the action, Bulgarian National Union Chairman Petur Petrov said the action was originally intended as a blockade and a sit-in, but this was canceled at the last moment, following the appeal made by the state leadership and the political forces on restoring the normal educational process. No illegal acts were allowed.

Government Moves Against Business Monopolies

AU1902163891 Sofia BTA in English 1449 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—Business executives have reacted most inadequately to the new economic situation. Acting from a monopolist position, many businesses took the lifting of price controls as an opportunity to make easy money. Consumers, however, were prepared and preempted the strike, Mr. Ivan Pushkarov, minister of industry, trade and services, told food industry and trade CEO's [chief executive officers] he met today.

The government has approved an ordinance on the control of the prices of goods and services to protect consumer interests. The Council of Ministers is also working on plans for demonopolization and privatization in some economic branches.

Mr. Dimitur Popov, chairman of the Council of Ministers, stressed that the government does not experiment but, realizing the risks and the privations facing the Bulgarian people, "embarked on the only possible way of salvation": the road of the economic reform.

Mr. Valeri Tsekov, deputy minister of industry, trade and services, says that the normalized market supplies are due to the shrunken consumption. He emphasized that certain monopolist businesses would scrap meat and other foods rather than make them available at lower prices.

The business executives singled out the forage shortage as their most serious problem. They want the repeal of some statutory acts which they see as crippling their free enterprise. A participant in the meeting said that in some parts of the country the regional councils have issued orders on pricing. The government was unaware of this fact.

Plovdiv To Receive Fuel Oil From Kazakhstan

AU1902145191 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 13 Feb 91 p 1

[Stefan Severin report on news conference by Ivan Ivanov, executive director of the Plovdiv Industrial Association in Plovdiv on 13 February]

[Text] Plovdiv, 12 February—Plovdiv will receive 45,000 tonnes of fuel oil from the town of Gurev in Kazakhstan in March. The fuel is ecologically pure and of high quality. This was announced at today's news conference minutes before signing the contract with the Gurev Petroleum Refinery.

The deal is on a barter basis and is valued at U.S.$5 million. Almost 24 [as published] Plovdiv enterprises and companies are supplying products as part of the deal. The town of Gurev will receive shipments of clothing, footwear, furniture, metalworking machinery, and canned foods.

A second barter deal has been agreed for 60,000 tonnes of fuel oil which will be delivered this autumn. In addition, a reply is awaited from Kazakhstan this month concerning a proposal to convert the two large Plovdiv central heating plants—Plovdiv North and South—to gas firing.

Oil Situation Improves; Soviet Shipment Arrives

AU1902092691 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 10 Feb 91 p 1

[Tsanko Raychev report: "Some 72,000 Tonnes Oil Arrive in Burgas Petrochemical Combine"]

[Text] Burgas, 9 February—The transportation of the 72,000 tonnes of oil delivered by the tanker, "Mesta," to the Burgas Petrochemical Combine, began on 8 February. The USSR guaranteed the delivery of 410,000 tonnes oil in February for the Bulgarian oil processing industry. In addition, the processing of an additional 250,000 tonnes is expected. Agreements for this additional quantity have been signed.

Comparison with January inspires optimism, because in the first month of 1991 the Burgas Petrochemical Combine processed only 209,000 tonnes of Soviet oil, delivered on the basis of a state order, and additional 37,000 tonnes, which were processed on the basis of a Soviet order. The combine's equipment functioned at its bare minimum capacity. The first quantity of oil in February arrived only on 5 February, but the 70,000 tonnes of Syrian oil that arrived with the "Osum" tanker did not help much to alleviate the country's critical fuel and petrochemical situation. The aforementioned quantity of Syrian oil was sent to Bulgaria for processing by a foreign customer, and the processed oil products will be sent across the border.

National Bank Announces Exchange Rate Changes

AU1902131691 Sofia BTA in English 1221 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—Yesterday the National Bank of Bulgaria announced a central bank exchange rate of 28.25 leva for 1 U.S. dollar. The exchange rate comes into force today.

It will be used for the purposes of accountancy and statistics and in customs evaluations and remittances. It is not binding for the commercial banks.

This decision cancels the basic exchange rate of the National Bank of Bulgaria and the market exchange rate of the Bulgarian Foreign Trade Bank which were established by the Socialist government in March 1990.

Yesterday Dimitur Popov's cabinet closed down by a governmental decree the State Committee on Prices. A national department on prices will be set up with the government to analyze prices and price-formation.

Yesterday the National Bank of Bulgaria gave all banks a temporary licence to sell and buy foreign currency within the country. It is expected that competition will lead to a temporary rise in the exchange rate of the dollar but many bank experts predict that it will drop quite soon.

Following are the central exchange rates of foreign currencies valid for February 19:

Currency		for:	Leva:
U.S dollar	USD	1.00	28.2500
Deutsche mark	DEM	1.00	19.0556
British sterling	GBP	1.00	55.4406
Swiss franc	CHF	1.00	23.5417
French franc	FRF	1.00	5.5985
Japanese yen	JPY	100.00	21.6957
Italian lira	ITL	100.00	2.5361
Austrian schilling	ATS	1.00	2.7059
Greek drachma	GRD	100.00	17.8177
Netherlands guilder	NGL	1.00	16.9141
Ecu	XEU	1.00	39.2110
Gold	XAU	1 troy ounce	10,283.0000
Silver	XAG	1 troy ounce	106.7003

BTA Says No Secret Service Agents in Agency

AU1902222291 Sofia BTA in English 1944 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Sofia, February 19 (BTA)—"No Secret Services employees work in the BTA," representatives of those services assured Mr. Ivo Indzhev, director general of the Bulgarian News Agency (BTA), at a meeting held at the agency today on Mr. Indzhev's initiative.

The director general demanded clarification on the operation of those services with respect to the BTA. He said that the subject, which has attracted much attention in the press, is of particular relevance at a time when the BTA has to cut down its staff.

A former employee and correspondent of the BTA in Madrid, Mr. Vladimir Ignatov, is serving a prison sentence for spying, divulging state secrets and other crimes. Mr. Ignatov admitted in the press that in 1975 he was recruited by State Security Main Department Two (the Counter-Intelligence Service).

Popov Announces New Foreign Affairs Appointments

AU1902164791 Sofia Domestic Service in Bulgarian 1615 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Council of Ministers Chairman Dimitur Popov has issued orders according to which Sava Neychov Staykov and Enyo Vasilev Savov have been relieved of their post as deputy ministers of foreign affairs. Ivan Georgiev Garvalov has been appointed first deputy minister of foreign affairs. Khristo Kolev Miladinov and Doncho Georgiev Donchev have been appointed deputy ministers of foreign affairs.

Agreement on Control Over Oil Pipeline Reached

AU1802102191

[Editorial Report] Prague HOSPODARSKE NOVINY in Czech on 11 February on page 2 carries a 200-word CTK report entitled "Agreement Reached." The report deals with an agreement concluded by representatives of the Czech, Slovak, and federal governments in Prague on 8 February on control over the Czechoslovakia oil pipeline system. The above agreement is also the subject of a 750-word interview with Jan Holcik, minister of industry of the Slovak Republic, in Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak on 11 February on pages 1 and 2. The interview, which was conducted in Bratislava "shortly after Minister Holcik's return from the Prague talks," is published under the headline "End to Complicated Talks." Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak on 14 February on page 2 carries a 200-word S. Tomanek report, entitled "Who Onto the Board of Directors," providing additional details on the agreement.

The HOSPODARSKE NOVINY report states that the 8 February Prague talks (which were attended by Economy Minister Dlouhy on behalf of the federal government; Deputy Prime Minister Kucerak and Minister Holcik on behalf of the Slovak government; and Deputy Prime Minister Vlasak and Minister Vrba on behalf of the Czech government) resulted in the agreement to have the "oil pipeline system in the CSFR controlled and administered by the 'Transpetrol' shareholding company, with its seat in Bratislava." This single company, responsible for oil pipelines on the entire CSFR territory, will be run by an 11-member board of directors. Should either the Czech, the Slovak, or the federal side feel "harmed" by a decision of the board of directors, it can request a meeting of government representatives to deal with the disputed issue.

In the NARODNA OBRODA interview, Minister Holcik specifies that "representatives of the federal government [on the board of directors] will have a stake neither in Transpetrol's capital nor in its profits." They will be represented on its board of directors for "strategic reasons," as the federal government must have control over oil supplies and contingency oil reservoirs. The federal government will reportedly "contribute" to the construction of such reservoirs.

Without specifying the Czech and Slovak sides' capital stake in Transpetrol, Holcik expresses satisfaction with the agreement reached in Prague as it respects the fact that some 73 percent of the oil pipeline system's fixed assets are in Slovakia and permits a "just distribution of profits." The agreement will also do away with the present injustice whereby the Slovnaft refinery in Bratislava must pay the same price for crude oil as the Litvinov refinery in the Czech Republic, despite much lower transportation costs. This difference should represent additional revenues of "more than 2.6 billion korunas" for Slovakia, according to Holcik.

Asked when Transpetrol will go into operation, Holcik replies that "this will not be as soon as many people assume" because "there is still much work in store for us in fine-tuning partial questions." He hopes, however, that the experts will complete their work so that Transpetrol Bratislava can go into business at the beginning of April.

The 14 February Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA report quotes engineer Peter Bielik, a Slovak Ministry of Industry official, on the composition of the Transpetrol board of directors. According to Bielik, six of the 11 members of the board of directors will represent Slovakia, three will represent the Czech Republic, and two the federal government, which means that Slovakia cannot be outvoted.

Finance Council Adopts Control Mechanism

AU1902151991 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 9 Feb 91 pp 1, 2

[CTK report: "Control Will Be Tougher"]

[Text] Prague— An extended group of CSFR Finance Council members met in Prague yesterday. Apart from the federal finance ministers and the Czechoslovak State Bank president, Ministers V. Dlouhy, P. Hofmann, A. M. Huska, K. Dyba, J. Belcak, and T. Jezek also participated in the debate this time. The council's agenda concentrated, among other things, on passing a judgment on the proposal for the establishment of a single market regulation fund in agriculture and federal jurisdiction over this fund, as well as on an assessment of the financial aspects of the BAZ [Bratislava Automobile Plant] - General Motors agreement. The decision about tougher supervision of adherence to price regulations is also important. The investigation will concentrate, above all, on the size of the trade markup in view of justifiable costs and the adequacy of the profit. The results of the investigation will be used to adopt tough measures against those who violate price regulations. The public will be informed about the course and the results of the investigation in a short time.

At its meeting, the CSFR Finance Council discussed the issue of granting credits for permanently maintained stock. It accepted the proposal of the Federal Ministry of Finance on how to expediently solve this extremely topical problem of the enterprises. This plan forms the content of a multi-page document that will be elaborated in the next few hours and days. [as published]

"We want, in any case," stressed V. Klaus, "to put this plan into practice as soon as possible—as of 1 March 1991, if possible. This news will certainly please many of our enterprises, and, undoubtedly, will please our banking system. It means that the banking system, the system of commercial banks, will get rid of these very unproductive—and, in fact, dangerous—credits and, on the other hand, for the enterprises it will mean that the repayment of these loans will be spread over eight years—and not until 30 June of this year, as was the case

so far. The interest rate on these loans—which will cease to be loans—will be reduced to less than half of today's interest rate."

Klaus on Initial Economic Reform Measures

AU2002092591 Prague ZEMEDELSKE NOVINY in Czech 13 Feb 91 pp 1, 6

[Interview with CSFR Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus by Radovan Muska; place and date not given: "Everyone Has an Opportunity"; first paragraph is ZEMEDELSKE NOVINY introduction]

[Text] Many of us who so vociferously clamored for economic reform now have the feeling that they have just been standing under a cold shower. For instance, anyone who has come face to face with current, in essence, monopolistic prices, may be wondering whether we have not initiated reform the other way round. That is, instead of privatization and the breaking up of monopolies, we only have price liberalization. To whom should we turn for an answer? Best of all to Federal Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, the main protagonist of reform.

[Klaus] No, this is not the case. Neither I nor any of my colleagues have ever said that prices will be liberalized when we have complete privatization, because this would be nonsensical reasoning. Mutually interconnected processes are involved that have their own internal dynamism. Each process operates at its own pace, and each is conditional on the other. At the same time, price liberalization creates massive demonopolization and privatization pressure and, for this reason, it was impossible to procrastinate.

[Muska] However, many people—among them renowned economists—maintain that reform should proceed either more rapidly or certain steps—specifically, price liberalization—should be somewhat delayed.

[Klaus] I sometimes feel that many people think that reform is a process that we have planned and then programmed into a large computer and that it is enough for some operator to press a button. However, reform is a huge and exceedingly complicated process where, apart from the government, an important role is played by the legislature, various political forces, the trade unions, and the public. It was certainly possible to take some steps more quickly. But so many factors were against them that it was simply impossible to implement them. The privatization law is one example. As far as delaying price liberalization is concerned, let me say again that we could not do this. In our economy, it would have been impossible to continue to dictate prices from the center without beginning to dictate everything else from the center again—production volumes, supplies, foreign trade, the distribution of hard currency, and so on.

[Muska] You mentioned certain factors that slowed down a more accelerated course of reform. I must say that I have the impression that politics, and not economics, took priority. Finally, the jurisdiction and other disputes undoubtedly delayed reform more than anything else.

[Klaus] I would not highlight jurisdiction issues alone. The fact is we are struggling with many different political problems that we have had very little time to deal with since November 1989. It is simply necessary to concede that we have them and that we will continue to have them. Even the most advanced countries have them. When they ask me in these countries why this or that is not proceeding more quickly in our country, I usually say: Why do you, who are familiar with the system of parliamentary democracy, with the routine of complex disputes involving trade union organizations, and with regional economic groupings such as the European Community, ask me why things are not proceeding more quickly?

[Muska] However, on the other hand, the situation does not seem to me to be completely normal if a member of the governing coalition—specifically, the Christian Democratic Movement—lets it be known now that it is working on an alternative plan for economic reform. That is, it is abandoning the coalition.

[Klaus] Let us not anticipate whether it is leaving the coalition or not, because, so far, no program has been submitted. In any case, it is simpler for them to declare that they have a different program than it is to present it and defend its contents.

[Muska] Nevertheless, it seems that in our country political arguments and disputes are more conspicuous than the concrete results of economic reform, if we leave out the consequences of price liberalization.

[Klaus] As far as people not seeing the tangible results of reform is concerned, we should ask ourselves what ideas—and even what illusions—we had about it. What illusions we had about how quickly we can achieve tangible results. I am afraid that many people have indeed succumbed to illusions. However, I believe we were sufficiently warned about them throughout last year and even during the years leading up to 17 November 1989. It has to be clear to everyone that our economy is on its last legs, we are on the edge of a precipice, and we cannot continue to wander along a well-trodden and comfortable path. I would say that the new world we are entering with a greater or lesser feeling of being drenched in cold water has not only shocked, worsened, and complicated our situation, but—first and foremost—it has also introduced a great opportunity for everyone. I think this is quite a tangible result. I do not want to hear from anyone that our country is in decline and that only illegal money changers have opportunities. This is simply not true.

[Muska] At the moment, of course, private entrepreneurs have opportunities, although even small-scale privatization is a somewhat long and drawn out process. Large enterprises are still waiting for privatization. If the

legislature finally approves the appropriate law next week, when do you think we can expect large-scale privatization to take place?

[Klaus] This is very difficult to gauge because, in essence, the role of the federal bodies—including our ministry—comes to an end with the drawing up of a strategy and its justification and proposal in the legislature. It then becomes a matter for the individual republics. You know, it would not even have occurred to me in my wildest dreams that if we had pushed small-scale privatization through the legislature last autumn, the first auctions would be taking place this January and—if I am reliably informed—the first auctions are supposed to take place in Slovakia sometime in April. If the large-scale privatization law is approved before the end of February, a three-month period for adding the final touches and technical prerequisites drawn up by the national governments or National Councils will, undoubtedly, follow. Investment vouchers will then have to be issued, national property funds—institutions involving everyone from the doorman to the director—will have to be established, and so on.

[Muska] This means we can hardly expect large-scale privatization this year.

[Klaus] No, I think it should begin in the second half of this year. Look, I would not paint everything so black and would not suppose that reform is becoming tied up in knots. If the legislature approves large-scale privatization now, it will only be one year since I—in a truly breakthrough proposition—put together a group of people at the Finance Ministry that I called the Office for the Temporary Administration of State Property and its Privatization, one year since we first came up with the idea for investment vouchers—that is, for a nonstandard method of privatization—and one year since we began to prepare the basic privatization scheme.

[Muska] However, before it approves the privatization law, the legislature has to debate and approve the law on extrajudicial rehabilitation, which is rather difficult to get through. In connection with this, do you not have the impression that specific lobbies and special interest groups are beginning to assert themselves in the legislature?

[Klaus] I would say that, under our conditions, the lobby concept is a little premature. Special interest groups are also not a feature in our country. At the moment, the situation is more that certain groupings are simply evolving and vanishing again in relation to individual issues. Unfortunately, this way they have their own smaller ideological, human, intrinsically specialist, or other bases. In this sense, they are unstable, and this is a specific problem. I am more bothered about something else. For instance, restitution is an issue that is indeed new and for which we have no rule book. We are on extremely slippery and thin ice when we know that everyone has many things for and against something, many things that can only be assessed with difficulty. One should thoroughly listen to individual arguments in favor of this or that solution. I think that some of the deputies do not behave in this manner. I am afraid that some deputies act as if they were infinitely sure of their own correctness, as if they had presented tried and true solutions that the others—simpletons—did not quite manage to understand. I see certain dangers here because the issue is not so simple as the antimonopoly law where, for instance, we can learn from the many similar laws in the world and choose the one that is best for us.

[Muska] We are clamoring for economic competition, but we have still not managed to break up the domestic monopolies and, moreover, we are protecting them from foreign competition with import surcharges. What is the ordinary consumer supposed to make of this?

[Klaus] The import surcharge is a short-term solution that has not been formulated as a measure to protect our enterprises, but to protect our foreign currency exchange rate. In any event, during the first period we have to reduce demand for imports so that all the money we received from the IMF and the EC to increase our reserves is not frittered away in one or two months. The import surcharge imposed on all kinds of consumer goods is not the primary restraint on competition. It would be if it were imposed on certain products only. However, I am opposed theoretically and ideologically to protectionist policies. You should realize that if you now want different exchange rates, different import surcharges, and different customs duties, then this is—in essence—a frantic demand to make the short-term situation stricter and to reduce our industry's marketing opportunities. After this, we could make an even greater attack on our enterprises. They cannot be transformed from day to day, but within a specific time period. We adopted the import surcharge as short-term protection for our exchange rate, and we are prepared to abolish it during the course of several weeks or months. This way its secondary protective impact will also disappear.

[Muska] I have heard a rumor among agriculturists that, within the framework of the agreement with the IMF, there is a certain secret clause whose aim is to suppress domestic agricultural production and give easy access to foreign products.

[Klaus] Absolutely no secret clauses in the agreement with the IMF have been or will be agreed upon. The memorandum that we concluded is public knowledge, and we submitted it, for example, to the trade unions. If agriculturists have the impression that we are making a policy attack on them, then they are deeply mistaken. We are currently experiencing the drama of price liberalization and we are thinking about how to survive in terms of days or weeks. We are concerned about surviving the measures leading from fixed to liberalized prices. At the same time, we are endeavoring to restrain the explosion in prices a little so that it is not too huge all at once. In this situation, the idea that a certain profit level should be calculated in a specific price valid today so that in

three years I will be able to finance necessary investments is an absolute misunderstanding. Prices are not formed the way they were under socialism. They are now being formed on the market, and we have to differentiate more graphically the current situation from longer-term development. Apart from this, if people are buying less milk and meat, it is not the state's fault, and it is not the fault of reduced subsidies.

As we are talking about milk, I would like to add something. I am presented everywhere as an antisocial person who strongly asserts economic measures at any price. However, against the will of all those around me, I defiantly insisted that milk prices be subsidized in January, so that they did not go up even more, because this seemed to me to be a terribly strong shock. However, on the other hand, we should see that giving 1.20 korunas per liter of milk for one month throughout Czechoslovakia represents an unbelievably high sum. This is infinitely more than if we were to bale out every enterprise that had 10,000 employees. In this case, everyone immediately has the impression that the Finance Ministry has backtracked. However, nothing else is involved in the milk issue.

Gross Foreign Debt Unchanged, Net Debt Grows

AU1902130391 Prague SVOBODNE SLOVO in Czech 12 Feb 91 p 4

[Text] Prague—At the end of last year, the gross foreign debt of the CSFR in convertible currency amounted to approximately 7.5 to 7.9 billion dollars. That puts it on the level of 1989. The situation is somewhat different in the net. The latter totaled -0.2 billion dollars at the end of 1989, and the estimate for last year is -0.9 to 1.3 billion dollars. As M. Svehla, spokesman of the Czechoslovak State Bank, emphasized, the data for 1990 are only preliminary. One must take into consideration that the transfer from CEMA foreign-trade methods to those of the IMF began last year. That means, among other things, that entirely new criteria must be applied to all debits and credits existing within the framework of CEMA and, in doing so, each country must be dealt with individually. A simple comparison of the foreign debt in the period of 1989 with that of 1991 shows that the volume of gross debt remains practically unchanged. Western financiers use in their calculations per capita gross debt, and so far its size is bearable. Debt servicing does not exceed the level of 20 percent of annual exports, which customarily means that the Czechoslovak economy is able to cover its obligations.

Jicinsky on Paradoxes of Parliamentary Politics

AU1502144491 Prague ZEMEEDELSKE NOVINY in Czech 11 Feb 91 pp 1,2

[Interview with Federal Assembly First Deputy Chairman Zdenek Jicinsky by Katerina Sladkova; place and date not given: "Government Parties in Opposition?"—first paragraph is ZEMEDELSKE NOVINY introduction]

[Text] A series of specific facts illustrates the rising tension on our domestic political scene. We touched upon some of them in our interview with Federal Assembly First Deputy Chairman Professor Zdenek Jicinsky.

[Sladkova] In connection with the political discussions intended to create a platform for drafting the new constitutions, the Christian Democratic Movement's [KDH] J. Carnogursky has demanded that some kind of state agreement be concluded between the Czech and Slovak Republics. In your opinion, is this concept a viable one?

[Jicinsky] I do not know whether J. Carnogursky's KDH has been inspired from the East—that is, from the USSR—where this arrangement is regarded as a possible variant for preventing the collapse of the last colonial empire. In any case, whoever recognizes the validity of our Constitution and, at the same time, the legitimacy of the National Councils and the Federal Assembly, cannot take such a proposal seriously. However, if the KDH—or, as the case may be, any other political force—was to go back on its statement that it wants to preserve the federation and instead wants an independent Slovak state, the situation would be different. In this case, two independent and absolutely sovereign republics could sincerely agree to establish—for specific matters—a joint body that will look after some of their interests. However, this would not be a federation, but a typical confederation. We can talk about a federation if it involves an independent and sovereign state composed of republics or other constitutional units. Our state's specific nature is based on a national-political principle. Although, theoretically, it could be said that this principle is an anachronism at the end of the 20th century; reality is different. The national element is politically so important that it may even threaten the existence of the state as we see in Yugoslavia today.

[Sladkova] It is apparent from current public opinion polls that the overwhelming majority of citizens—in Slovakia, too—are in favor of preserving the federation. Should the opinion of the majority not be a determining factor for future development?

[Jicinsky] Although this will probably not sound encouraging, an unsteady domestic political situation gives a considerable amount of autonomy to the decision-making of political parties that, to a certain extent, are able to deviate from overwhelming public opinion. Therefore, today it is necessary for the most important social and political forces to unequivocally state what they actually want. At the same time, they have to take into consideration what kind of solutions are still acceptable to their partners. In this connection, I think that a union [spolkove] arrangement based on the principle of equality among Bohemia, Moravia, possibly Silesia, and

Slovakia is not viable for current Slovak political representatives. Slovak Prime Minister V. Meciar makes no secret of this.

[Sladkova] However, our domestic disputes have a considerable international aspect.

[Jicinsky] European and world communities have made it clear to us that they regard us as a single federative state. The consequences of a breach of the current situation would, first and foremost, be grave for us ourselves. International agreements as well as our present borders are involved here. It is also impossible to allow ourselves to attach arbitrary significance to certain concepts depending on how it suits us. For instance, we could not pretend to be a federation if we were not actually a federation.

[Sladkova] Political instability has also manifested itself in the legislature. Government draft laws are being torpedoed not only by the opposition but also by deputies from the government and coalition parties.

[Jicinsky] This phenomenon is indeed very disturbing. Last week several deputies vehemently protested against a report containing misinformation that, allegedly, government changes were being prepared. However, how are we supposed to understand the fact that deputies from parties making up the government coalition are, by the way they behave, neither supporting the government's program nor its draft laws. This is unthinkable in normally functioning parliamentary democracies. By constantly amending and supplementing its draft laws, the government gets itself into a situation where it is forced to alter its fundamental plans. By considerably intervening in the government's agenda, the legislature tends to take some of its executive power on itself. If the government does not have support among deputies from the government coalition, it is practically impossible for it to govern. Effective executive power is essential for the state to function properly.

[Sladkova] If lobby experimentation is to be prevented, should we know specifically who is behind it and why?

[Jicinsky] It is unnecessary to give any names. It is enough to monitor the way some deputies—for instance, from the Civic Forum—approach discussions on the government's draft law on extrajudicial rehabilitation. I consider it particularly significant that a number of them are unaware—or do not want to be aware—of the impact on society of the proposed changes asserted by them.

Moravian-Silesian Constitution Being Drafted

AU1902125591 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 12 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Brno—Representatives of political parties, movements, and associations active in Moravia and Silesia met in Brno at the third Moravian-Silesian roundtable.

They became acquainted with the results of the debates in the Czech government and in the Czech National Council that basically meet the demands for the transformation of the CSFR into a union-type [spolkovy] state. In this connection, the participants in the debate initiated the establishment of a group of experts who will work on a draft Moravian-Silesian constitution, or draft Moravian and Silesian constitutions, as the case may be. Furthermore, they agreed to establish a 10-member working group that, in the period until the fourth Moravian-Silesian roundtable talks, will hold talks with Slovak as well as Czech political representatives. Minister Jaroslav Sabata was asked to convey to the Czech government the demand made by the participants that citizens who claim Moravian and Silesian nationality be counted separately in the census.

VPN Supports Moravia in Self-Determination

AU1902101991 Prague SVOBODNE SLOVO in Czech 12 Feb 91 p 4

["(zjk)"-signed report: "Moravia - The Sequel"]

[Text] Bratislava—F. Gal, Public Against Violence [VPN] movement chairman, declared at yesterday's news conference in Bratislava that Moravian and Silesian demands for greater autonomy and self-administration are justified and should be resolved within the framework of the Czech Republic Constitution.

If this problem is formulated in a different manner, F. Gal continued, then we will face a new political situation, and we will have to start talking from scratch. If Moravian and Silesian status cannot be resolved by the Czech Republic Constitution, then we will begin to search for a new consensus.

Comments were heard at the news conference that Council of Europe institutions were slightly surprised by the fact that, while Poland and Hungary cooperate with them when drafting their constitutions, the same cannot be said about the CSFR. The explanation of this course of action was unclear in Bratislava yesterday, even if the problem is quite obvious. While Hungary and Poland are drafting one constitution each, we, at first, must reach a consensus at home about our three constitutions and avoid bringing our disputes to the Council of Europe, where they are aware of our situation anyway.

P. Tatar, one of the leading VPN representatives, made an important statement when, on behalf of the VPN, he unequivocally took Defense Minister L. Dobrovsky under his protection and rejected any doubts about his competency. He said that the VPN has no doubts about his course of action in the administration of the ministerial department entrusted to him.

Moravians, Silesians Criticize Czech Attitudes

AU1902125091 Prague SVOBODNE SLOVO in Czech 18 Feb 91 p 4

[Unattributed report: "An Assembly Without Journalists"]

[Text] Brno—The land assembly of chairmen from Movement for Self-Governing Democracy-Society for

Moravia and Silesia [HSD-SMS] district centers, which took place on Saturday [16 February] without the participation of journalists, adopted a point of view on the results of Czech National Council voting on the constitutional arrangement. The assembly expressed its indignation at the course of action taken by Prime Minister P. Pithart and at the incorrect conduct of some Civic Forum deputies who—as was said in Brno—behave contrary to the fundamental ethical principles applicable to deputies' activity. The chairmen also think that the issue involves an attempt to keep Moravia and Silesia in an undignified economic and political status by claiming that it is necessary to put economic reform before a land system. They think that an autonomous land arrangement would prove more effective in alleviating the original negative impact of reform on citizens. The land assembly of chairmen from HSD-SMS district centers reserves the right to undertake, in cooperation with other political forces in Moravia and Silesia, specific domestic political and foreign policy measures aimed at renewing land autonomy.

Moravians Protest CNR Resolution

AU2002104791 Prague SVOBODNE SLOVO in Czech 15 Feb 91 pp 1, 3

["mag"-signed report: "Moravians Walked Out"]

[Excerpts] The 14th meeting of the Czech National Council [CNR] continued yesterday after a break of one week. [passage omitted] The session started with a delay of almost one hour because the draft resolution on the Czech government's report on the implementation of its policy statement was not ready.

When V. Vanak (Civic Forum) finally read the draft resolution, deputies were able to consider its main points. The most important of them concerned the constitutional arrangement of the state. [passage omitted] In the end, the CNR passed a modified version of the draft, proposed by the Civic Forum, which states: "A union-type [spolkove] arrangement is possible only within the framework of the entire federation, on the basis of a decision of the CSFR Federal Assembly. The CNR instructs the CNR Presidium to work out prior to the next CNR plenary session a timetable for the formulation of the CNR's standpoint on the constitutional and territorial-administrative arrangement of the state. This standpoint must be based on an extensive analysis containing the political, organizational, administrative, as well as economic aspects of all possible alternatives."

After the approval of this modified draft, deputies for the Movement for Self-Governing Democracy-Society for Moravia and Silesia [HSD-SMS] demonstratively left the hall. While Communist deputies abstained from voting, deputies for the HSD-SMS voted against the resolution because they fear that the issue of the constitutional arrangement of the state will be put off until the distant future.

After this somewhat tumultuous part of the meeting, the CNR heard reports on the activity of the CNR Presidium and on the activity of the CNR screening commission. This report defended, among other things, the decision to recall B. Moldan from the post of minister of the environment. B. Moldan, who also took the floor, reiterated that he had never been a secret collaborator of the State Security Corps. Commenting on the affair, Czech Prime Minister P. Pithart said that the recalling of B. Moldan was not an act of punishment but an act of prevention. Individual clubs of deputies then met to clarify some details concerning screenings and the meeting was interrupted.

Barta on Dismissal, Struggle of Moravians

AU1902151491

[Editorial Report] Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 9 February on page 5, under the headline "It Is the War of Pragocentrism," publishes a 1400-word interview with Professor Boleslav Barta, chairman of the Movement for Self-Governing Democracy-Society for Moravia and Silesia [HSD-SMS], by PRAVDA reporters Stefan Mesaros and Lubo Rabay. The place and date of the interview are not given. Commenting on his dismissal from the Federal Assembly Presidium, Barta says that he was aware of an index listing all "ill-suited" deputies in the Presidium in which he figured since last autumn. According to Barta, he was tolerated until his movement "left the coalition and began to organize demonstrations because the other party was deaf to their demands." There is an operation called "wedge," he says, which is aimed at splitting the HSD-SMS and it acted fast to remove "before the discussions of CSFR and the Czech Republic Constitutions begin." The reason for this, according to Barta, is that he would be for the union arrangement of the Republic (as opposed to the two-member federation). Moreover, he says, he could not defend himself as the decision was made in his absence.

Further, Barta explains that the reasons for the union arrangement are purely economic. The resources produced in a region should stay in that region. The interviewer responds with an assertion that Barta "voices only his own opinion and that of his followers, while the media report that most of the Moravian and Silesian population agree with the Prague policy." Barta denies this noting that the movement's secretariat receives thousands of letters and 90 percent of them support the union arrangement, some of them even "write that they have considered themselves to be Czechs, but the Pragocentrist policy convinced them of the need to keep away from it; that is why they regard themselves as Moravians. Moreover, this policy actually united all existing parties and movements in Moravia and Silesia."

Asked about the rumored "maneuvering and playing of the so-called Slovak card," Barta says that Slovaks have been accused of "chauvinism and of breaking the federation" by the Czech and the federal politicians and journalists and "now the Moravians became a part of the target." Nevertheless, he says, the movement does not intend to involve the Slovak politicians in the Moravian struggle. He asserts, however, that the simple reason why

Prague is against the tripartite federation is that "Slovakia and Moravia could join against an antidemocratic decision from Prague and say: No!"

In the conclusion to the interview, Barta states that his movement is against demonstrations and strikes. Unfortunately, "the Pragocentrist system has not listened to their demands. A year ago, President Havel said that he approves of the movement's demands but that they will have to win them in a struggle. So we began." Nevertheless, Barta prefers dealing with the problems in the legislature.

Supporters of Current Civic Forum Status Meet

LD1702205491 Prague CTK in English 1849 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Prague Feb 16 [date as received] (CTK)—Representatives of a wing in the Civic Forum (OF), who are opposed to the transformation of this most influential force in the Czech Republic into one political party, met here today to harmonize their stands before the movement's congress scheduled for February 23.

The Civic Forum, founded in November 1989 as a movement representing a wide spectrum of opinion from left to right, is now heading towards a division into two streams: the democratic right which wants to establish itself as a right-wing political party and the other a liberal wing which seeks to preserve the movement's broadly based origins.

Participants in today's meeting were representatives of the liberal stream, including Deputy Prime Minister Pavel Rychetsky and Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart, but they also included Economics Minister Vladimir Dlouhy, one of only two federal government ministers who did not declare their allegiance to the liberal wing last December. There were also members of a third wing, which declared itself to be a group for the preservation of the authentic Civic Forum earlier this month.

The movement-status supporters said today that the latest proposal of OF prominent personalities to divide the movement into two factions, with an umbrella body to preserve it as one entity, was one of possible solutions. They will present their own version of how the movement should achieve this at the congress next week.

The group which calls for the authentic OF, represented by three ministers of the Czech Government, including Jaroslav Sabata and Trade Minister Vlasta Stepova, demanded at their meeting yesterday that next week's OF session should not be a full-fledged congress because a fortnight in which it is being called is too short a time to bring together delegates representing sufficiently all local branches. They also expressed "fears from the conduct of OF district managers who behave like former Communist Party apparatchiks."

These managers voted at the last OF congress to turn the movement into a party but many OF circles have since criticized this as a lack of democratic procedure and said they did not sufficiently represent the full extent of opinion in the movement. After this, OF leaders and top personalities agreed to propose the division of the movement into two groups which was described by OF chairman and Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus as "divorce, Czech style."

Disunity Within OF Continues

LD1902222191 Prague CTK in English 2100 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Prague Feb 19 (CTK)—The Council of the Civic Forum (OF) failed to agree today on one interpretation of an earlier proposal to divide this largest political force in Czechoslovakia into two groups under one umbrella body.

In a move that puts in question the planned special OF congress next Saturday, February 23, the council said it would meet at an emergency session next Friday in another attempt to find a solution to the present crisis.

The council decided to put off the regular Friday OF briefing from February 22 until after the special congress.

The Civic Forum was founded at the height of public anti-communist protests in November 1989 as a movement representing a broad range of opinion from Left to Right. Since then polarization has taken place in its ranks but its followers differ on how it should be reflected in its structure.

The OF congress voted last December 12 to turn the movement into a party but another wing in the OF said that the congress was not representative enough and set up a group seeking OF's preservation as a movement. To solve this dilemma leaders of the streams in the OF met with President Vaclav Havel, an OF co-founder, on February 10 and agreed on the proposal to divide the OF into two groups. This was thought as a way to avoid disputes. However, there were protests that the grass root opinion was ingored.

First OF Deputy Chairman Lubor Kinst told CTK during today's council debate that one stream in the OF wants to see the OF divided even if it is to cease to exist as a legal person.

This stream, as well as supporters of OF's division into groups, two or more, while preserving the OF as a legal entity, will prepare their proposals for Friday's meeting.

OF deputies in the Czech parliament grouped in the Liberal Club urged delegates to the special OF congress today to judge the consequences that the decision to divide the OF might have in the middle of the election term. They warned that OF's extinction or its change into another form could put the future political and economic development in the country at risk.

Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, OF chairman since mid-October, has been absent from the country in the last few days. He said earlier this month he would step down if the proposal to divide the OF into two groups were not accepted.

Disapproval of Split Voiced

AU2002105691 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 14 Feb 91 p 2

[Text] CTK—Representatives of the Initiative Group for Preserving the Civic Forum as a Movement expressed their categorical disagreement with the conclusions made at Sunday's [10 February] meeting in Lany between representatives of the main political currents within the Civic Forum and President V. Havel, and with the Civic Forum Council's decision to convene a Civic Forum Extraordinary Republican Assembly on Saturday 23 February. It follows from their declaration that they were prevented from participating in the Lany discussions. Czech National Council Deputy M. Masatova expressed her doubts about the voting at the recent Civic Forum Assembly that decided on the transformation of the movement into a party. The extraordinary assembly has been, in the opinion of the representatives of the initiative group, convened too early.

Commentary Views Impact of Civic Forum 'Divorce'

AU2002135691 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 15 Feb 91 p 3

[Igor Cibula commentary: "The Legislature Must Not Be Allowed To Become Crippled; On the Impact of the Announced Civic Forum Divorce"]

[Text] A month has already elapsed since the Civic Forum's [OF's] republican assembly that launched that movement's transformation into a political party but, according to data provided by [former OF spokesman] Jan Urban, only about 400 activists have registered with Vaclav Klaus' new party. Even if the actual number were ten times as high, it would be impossible to say that that party's embarkation onto the political stage has been dynamic. Members of the Interparliamentary Club of the Democratic Right see the reason for this situation in the fact that "the extensive campaign of misinformation waged by some representatives of the [OF] Liberal Club, the staff of the OF Coordinating Center, and some other OF constituent parts against the results of the OF assembly held in January has cast aspersions on the OF and has drawn on much of its leading representatives' energy." A different interpretation of the situation comes from the Group for the Preservation of the OF Movement, which views the decisions of the January assembly chiefly as an expression of the interests of the paid OF functionaries at district level, who, by their ambitions, are closer to Vaclav Klaus than they are to rank-and-file OF supporters.

Neither explanation can be considered complete, but both of them can be used to illustrate the situation in Czech politics. Observers of this situation could not be surprised by the fact that, even before the ink on the Sunday [10 February] agreement of Lany [on the division of the OF into two groupings that would remain in coalition until the next elections] could become dry, doubts began to spread about the significance of that meeting of quarreling politicians with President Vaclav Havel. Several OF district managers have qualified that agreement as inadmissible interference in the development of the situation and as a defiance of the conclusions of the last OF Assembly.

Should the hastily convened OF republican assembly confirm the announced OF "divorce," it will be impossible—despite Vaclav Klaus' categorical assurances that there will not be any changes in the composition of the federal government—to rule out the perseverance of speculations about a reduction of the preponderance of ministers who come from the [OF] Liberal Club. Similarly, in the legislature it will be impossible to prevent deputies who come from the [OF Interparliamentary Club of the] Democratic Right from confronting their views more vigorously with the views of their other colleagues from the original OF. Equally warranted is the fear that this "peculiar coalition" may not last until the next legislative elections but will fall apart even before the start of the election campaign.

The coming period will require from all the politicians concerned a great deal of readiness for compromise if internal political stability is to be preserved. Their failure to get rid of their "party" prejudices against their partners could easily cripple the legislature and paralyze the proper functioning of the constitutional bodies of our state. Although the above vision is an extreme one, it is necessary to call it to mind lest we find ourselves in a blind alley, at a time when the economic reform that has been started requires us not to waste society's potential.

Minister Fears Collapse of Supplies

AU1902162391

[Editorial Report] Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech on 13 February on page 3 carries a 2,800-word interview with Czech Republic Trade Minister Vlasta Stepova by Jiri Leschtina entitled "The Vision of a Stubborn Minister." In the interview, the place and date of which are not given, Stepova defends her plan to turn the largest food stores, especially supermarkets in the new housing estates, into shareholding companies owned by the state with foreign partners and exclude them thereby from the current process of small privatization. As the interviewer points out, this plan has "aroused the anger" of the "privatization team" of Tomas Jezek, the Czech minister of privatization.

Stepova says that she "insists" on her plan despite the opposition of her government colleague. She argues that "small privatization as it is being handled will lead to the fragmentation of food retailing and to its absolute collapse. If this collapse is to be forestalled, we must return to the plan of my ministry to create the backbone of food

retailing in the form of shareholding companies with foreign participation." Stepova points out that food retailing in all advanced economies is dominated by large chain stores, which permit economies of scale. The sale of all shops to small private businessmen will "represent a return to the conditions of early capitalism," according to the minister. She also fears that many of the new shop owners will not want to sell food, or not the full range of food products, which might endanger food supplies.

At the same time Stepova rejects the charge that she opposes privatization in food retailing. She says that her plan concerns only about 10 percent of food shops, those with more than 20 employees, and that the remaining 90 percent would still be sold within the framework of small privatization. Besides, the transformation of current state enterprises into shareholding companies, too, amounts to privatization.

Asked why the links with powerful foreign partners cannot be established by individual shop owners, Stepova sees "two main impediments" to this. The first is time. As she observes, a private businessman who has invested several million korunas in the purchase of a large shop will not be able to afford any additional investments for a long time and it will take years before he "finds out that he could join forces with someone." The foreign chains, on the other hand, want to start operating immediately and they want to know with how many shops they can reckon. The other impediment is that the foreign partners need a Czechoslovak partner with "the necessary prerequisites" (such as education, experience, business contacts, and knowledge of languages). Stepova fears that most individual shop owners will not meet the foreign partners' expectations.

In concluding, Stepova expresses the hope that she will succeed in enlisting the support for her plan from district privatization commissions, which select businesses for sale in auctions, and that at least some of the large shops will be excluded from small privatization. She mentions that her ministry has been conducting negotiations with foreign companies such as Ahold, Spar, and Billa, all of which are interested in investing in Czechoslovakia. In this context she denies rumors that she has been "bribed" by these foreign supermarket chains to promote their interests.

Slovak, Slovene Prime Ministers on Independence

AU1902100991 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 12 Feb 91 pp 1, 9

[Julius Loerincz dispatch: "It Is the Many Colors That Make a Meadow Beautiful"]

[Excerpts] "We dealt with two key topics—we exchanged information on the passage of power-sharing laws and on the preparation of the constitutions of the republics and the federation and we discussed the possibilities of developing economic cooperation between Slovakia and Slovenia." This is how Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar characterized the two days he spent in Slovenia yesterday afternoon before departing for Belgrade. [passage omitted]

The visit to Slovenia took place at a time that is undoubtedly dramatic. The Slovene political representatives stressed in unison that they have decided on a "state divorce" with Yugoslavia because, in their opinion, it is impossible to come to an agreement with the other republics, which is why even the idea of a Yugoslav confederation is not realistic. According to information available here, even Serbia has now come to accept Slovenia's departure from Yugoslavia. A Slovene Radio correspondent asked our Prime Minister V. Meciar whether Slovakia would recognize Slovenia's independence. He replied that an answer to this question can only be given in a specific situation and that he should ask him the question after Slovenia actually becomes independent. He stressed that he is not qualified to assess the political situation in Yugoslavia from the viewpoint of whether the federation is good or not and whether or not a certain arrangement is suitable for the country. This would amount to interference in internal affairs.

Whereas within the ranks of our delegation one spoke about Europe not being favorably disposed toward changes of this kind, the opposite view clearly prevails here. In this context, our newspaper put an identical question to both prime ministers—A. Peterle and V. Meciar: "You are both known as fighters for a more distinct, independent role of small nations in Europe, but at the same time you speak about the need for greater integration in the European process. Is there no contradiction here?"

V. Meciar was the first to reply: "Not at all. Integration has several aspects. Its basic form is economic integration, which then leads to the integration of entire political systems and helps form large entities. Every entity is made up of many parts, however. We are not opposed to integration, but we want to know what the chances of small nations in a united Europe are. We want to know whether they are to cease to exist in the name of big Europe, which would be to its detriment, or whether they will have the opportunity to partake in policy-making and defend their interests. We want to retain our identity in those areas in which we are distinct. In other words, our striving for national identity is not directed against our partner in the federal alliance but at securing our own share in the shaping of Europe. I believe that the integration processes should help even the small nations retain their identity. The mutual enrichment of the creativity and culture of nations will be one of the motivational forces of the future Europe. I am convinced that regional policy is of significance, which is why we have communicated here the decision of the Slovak National Council to prepare a meeting of representatives of the legislatures of small nations. It is the many colors that make a meadow beautiful. And the picture of Europe will be beautiful only if all colors—that is, all nations—have their place in it."

A. Peterle stressed that the quest for the independent existence of nations does not mean the disintegration of Europe, because it is precisely sovereign entities, sovereign nations, that integrate at ease. The problem at present is that they do not avail themselves of sufficient opportunities for integration on a fully equal footing, A. Peterle, prime minister of the Slovene Republic, stressed.

Slovak Legislature on Lack of Overseas Envoys

LD1502221191 Bratislava Domestic Service in Slovak 1100 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Report by editors Alica Bielikova and Magda Pospisilova from the 10th session of the Slovak National Council]

[Excerpts] The political debate at the 10th session of the Slovak National Council can be divided, we believe, into two basic parts. The first one, Slovakia's sovereignty within the federation and abroad; and the second one, the impact of disjointed developments in the economic reform on citizens.

The first subject was provoked by the address by Milan Knazko, minister of international relations in the Slovak Republic. He painted a not very cheerful picture of our Slovak representation in foreign diplomatic services, which does not at all reflect the federation that we want to build. The overall ratio in the number of diplomats and diplomatic missions in advanced Western countries is one to eight to the disadvantage of the Slovaks. To give you some specific examples, in Bonn, for instance, the ratio of Slovak and Czech diplomats is three to 20, in Rome one to six, in Washington two to 11. That is why the Slovak Foreign Ministry is trying to push through a principle according to which the representation of Slovak citizens in foreign diplomatic missions would not be proportionate but of parity.

Answering a question by deputy Anton Hrnko [Slovak National Party] on whether an opening of separate representations abroad is being considered, Minister Knazko replied that the Slovak Republic, under a valid constitution, can and is considering opening only commercial and cultural agencies and not diplomatic missions. [passage omitted]

Speaking in the debate a short while ago, Deputy Mikulas Huba [Green Party] commented very sharply on the fact that Prime Minister Meciar was not attending the 10th session of the Slovak National Council, and Green Party Deputy Gabriela Kaliska voiced a similar view. In response, Frantisek Miklosko pointed out that three deputy prime ministers were present, and that was equivalent to one prime minister. Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Ondrus described Mikulas Huba's comments as very undignified and the Slovak National Council Presidium should take note of them.

Slovak National Council Approves Four New Laws

AU2002103691 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 14 Feb 91 pp 1, 2

[Antonia Vymazalova and Stefan Hrcko report: "Number of Unemployed in the Slovak Republic: 60,583; Number of Unemployed in the Czech Republic: 58,895"]

[Excerpts] Bratislava—A total of 102 (out of 150) Slovak legislature deputies "opened" the second day of its 10th session by discussing the government draft Slovak National Council [SNR] law on taxation bodies. The morning session was chaired by SNR First Deputy Chairman Ivan Carnogursky. The majority of Slovak government members, but not Prime Minister V. Meciar, attended the session.

The government draft was outlined by Slovak Finance Minister Michal Kovac. He stated that it decisively establishes a tax organization system in Slovakia. It will be composed of the 145 existing tax offices and tax inspectorates. The tax offices will guarantee the collection of almost all taxes in our republic, apart from property tax, agricultural taxes on citizens' land, and local surcharges which will be administered by communities. Import taxes and customs duties will be administered by customs bodies. The tax inspectorates, as the bodies administering the tax offices, will fulfill the function of current regional finance administrations. They should be established in Bratislava, Nitra, Trnava, Zilina, Banska Bystrica, Presov, and Kosice.

Ladislav Kliman (Party of the Democratic Left [SDL]), the committees' joint reporter, recommended—after reviewing the amendments and supplementary adjustments—that the government draft law be approved. [passage omitted]

The Slovak legislature approved the government draft SNR law on tax organizations with the adopted changes and supplements. Of the 123 deputies present (attendance had increased), 93 were in favor, 23 were against, and seven abstained.

Before the midday recess, I. Carnogursky announced the composition of the SNR Screenings Commission that should prepare the SNR's point of view on screening in the Slovak Republic. Its members are as follows: On behalf of the Public Against Violence movement—Vladimir Cecetka and Marcel Stryko; on behalf of the Christian Democratic Movement—Frantisek Javorsky and Miroslav Pollak; on behalf of the Democratic Party—Ivan Brndiar and Michal Geci; on behalf of the Slovak National Party—Marian Andel and Marian Janus; on behalf of the SDL—Eduard Barany and Jozef Dobrovolny; on behalf of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement-Egyutteles—Laszlo Dobos and Stefan Bartakovics; and on behalf of the Green Party—Gabriela Kaliska and Marian Buday. [passage omitted]

Labor and Social Affairs Minister Stanislav Novak outlined the government draft SNR law on the activity of Slovak bodies in implementing employment policy. The draft law is part of a series of legal regulations that should guarantee a citizen's right to employment as well as his right to adequate financial security in the event that his right to employment cannot be exercised. The minister said that the statistics on the number of unemployed in Slovakia are beginning to be rather alarming. On 1 February 1990, 1,794 people were registered as unemployed, on 1 July 1990 this figure was 8,942, and on 1 February 1991 it was 60,583. In the Czech Republic 58,895 people are unemployed; this is the first time we have "succeeded" in overtaking them. In Slovakia 34,826 citizens are receiving benefits, and in the Czech Republic 31,744 people are receiving them. Prior to 1 February 1991, there were 9,740 vacancies in Slovakia and 48,657 in the Czech Republic. [passage omitted]

After approving individual comments, the SNR law on the activity of Slovak bodies in implementing employment policy was approved by a majority of the 121 deputies present (105 were in favor, eight were against, and eight abstained; four deputies turned up later).

During the evening, the deputies discussed the government draft SNR law which changes and supplements SNR Law No. 41/1972 on the activity of Slovak Socialist Republic bodies in the sphere of socioeconomic information contained in the version of SNR Law No. 175/1989. The draft was outlined by Slovak Deputy Prime Minister Jozef Kucerak. Among other things, it reviews territorial activity and changes the locations of Slovak territorial statistical bodies in view of the Slovak Republic's new territorial arrangement. An exceptional occurrence in the approval of this amendment was the fact that all 102 deputies present voted in favor of it.

At the suggestion of Deputy Eduard Barany (SDL), the legislature discussed the government draft SNR laws on changing the names of the Slovak College of Technology [SVST] in Bratislava and the College of Technology [VST] in Kosice. Deputies approved both laws. As of 1 April the SVST in Bratislava and the VST in Kosice will be called the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava and the Technical University in Kosice.

The SNR session continues today.

More on SNR Session

AU1902150391 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 13 Feb 91 pp 1,2

[Jan Fuele report: "Legislative Session Also About Screenings; Jiri Dienstbier Addressed the 10th Meeting of the Slovak National Council"]

[Excerpts] Bratislava— The first day of the 10th meeting of the Slovak National Council [SNR] started just as was to be expected after the previous meetings of the SNR committees—with a change in its agenda. At the recommendation of Deputy Vladimir Sladek (Public Against Violence [VPN] movement), a debate on screenings was included in the agenda of the meeting. [passage omitted] At the same time, the Slovak Republic Government withdrew from the agenda the government-sponsored draft law of the SNR on state financial auditing because five out of 10 legislative committees had not endorsed it.

The opening part of yesterday's SNR meeting belonged to Jiri Dienstbier, CSFR deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. [passage omitted] Many questions addressed to Jiri Dienstbier concerned the representation of Slovaks in the diplomatic service. In response to a statement by M. Huska (VPN), the minister said that many Slovaks are reluctant to join the diplomatic service because, supposedly, it is a problem for them to move temporarily to Prague to work at the CSFR Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The greatest disproportions at Czechoslovak missions abroad, in terms of national parity, concern the lower ranks. According to Minister Dienstbier, 30.1 percent of ambassadors, 33.3 percent of counselors, and 33.3 percent of general consuls are Slovaks. [passage omitted]

Thereafter came the turn of the much-debated issue of screenings. [passage omitted] After a debate that lasted more than three hours, the deputies decided to appoint by this Friday [15 February] a commission composed of two representatives from each party or movement represented in the legislature, provided that they show interest in participating in the work of this commission. Following consultations with the federal minister of interior, the minister of interior of the Slovak Republic, the prosecutor general of the Slovak Republic, and the minister of justice of the Slovak Republic, this commission will formulate a standpoint on screenings in the Slovak Republic and will submit it to the SNR Presidium. This standpoint will then be discussed in the SNR committees and at the subsequent SNR meeting. [passage omitted] This decision was reached after a very reasonable and well-informed speech by Ladislav Pittner, minister of interior of the Slovak Republic. He explained how the network of agents was organized and said that one category of agents—the category "f"—is not entered in any register of files. [passage omitted] The registers of criminal records, which must also be considered during screenings, are not complete either. Several pages from the Bratislava register have been cut out by a razor blade, and in the Banska Bystrica register, there are several years for which there are no entries at all.

At the close of yesterday's meeting, the deputies approved the Legal Measure of the SNR Presidium on the Establishment of the Police Corps [policajny zbor] of the Slovak Republic. The Police Corps will be guided by the security policy of the Slovak Republic Government and will be subjected to control by the government, the SNR, and the public.

[Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 13 February on pages 1 and 2 carries a 1,200-word correspondents' report on the above SNR meeting. It mentions that K. Kondasova,

chairwoman of the SNR Mandate and Immunity Committee, announced at the meeting that Jozef Miklosko (Christian Democratic Movement) and Alexander Varga (VPN) had "surrendered their mandates as deputies." Their vacated seats in the Slovak legisalture will be taken by Vladimir Horvath (Christian Democratic Movement) and Jozef Moravcik (VPN)]

Slovakia Dissents From Federal Restitution Bill

LD1902150591 Prague CTK in English 1400 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bratislava Feb 19 (CTK)—The Slovak government does not agree with the federal government bill on the restitution of property nationalized after 1948.

After discussing the bill here today the Slovak government said that it causes serious economic, political and moral problems today. As regards the form of restitutions the Slovak government recommends to compensate nationalized property and finances in the form of coupons which can be used in the process of privatization.

The Slovak government recommends to deal with property nationalized only after February 25, 1948.

The Czech government took note of the bill yesterday. The federal government took into consideration recommendations of parliament deputies to it.

The Slovak government does not recommend the adoption of the bill on restitutions in the form it has been put forward, Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar told journalists in Bratislava today.

He said the Slovak government recommends the bill which it described as unjust to be returned to the federal government for reworking. At the same time he said the Slovak government requires that a newly elaborated bill should enable the Slovak parliament to respect Slovakia's specific conditions and embody such conditions in a law.

If the present bill on restitutions is approved the Slovak government will not be able to fulfil any point of its program, he stressed.

The Slovak prime minister further said he is ready to respect Moravia's and Silesia's requests for the future arrangement of Czechoslovakia but made it clear this is the problem of the Czech parliament (Czech National Council) and the Czech government and not of the Slovak authorities.

Knazko on Slovak Minorities in Hungary, SFRY

LD1502202691 Prague CTK in English 1630 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Bratislava Feb 15 (CTK)—The Slovak minority in Hungary was not suppressed but forgotten while in Serbia it was supported from the Yugoslav Federal Government resources, according to Slovak officials who recently returned from an official visit to Hungary, Slovenia and Serbia.

Slovak Minister for External Relations Milan Knazko informed journalists here today about this visit by a Slovak government delegation.

He further spoke about his talks with Czechoslovak foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier on powers at the level of their ministries. He said his ministry insists on parity representation as regards diplomats and ambassadors. The Slovak ministry also plans to open an information centre in Slovakia with the aim to spread abroad more objective information about Slovakia, he added.

Small Slovak Parties Want to Unify

AU2002090591 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 13 Feb 91 p 6

[Iris Cibulova commentary: "Opposition Against the Opposition"]

[Text] In the eyes of the public, the Slovak National Party [SNS] is a party that asserts Slovak national issues in a most energetic manner. Despite the fact that much could have been read between the lines of its election program, at the beginning its representatives avoided setting forth an unequivocal demand for the establishment of an independent Slovak state. Aspirations for an independent state could only be heard from the crowd at meetings, national celebrations, or from Slovaks living abroad.

The SNS's success in legislative elections was caused, among other things, by its orientation toward social problems and, maybe, the absence of Meciar's energetic defense of national interests through official political representatives contributed to this success as well. This, too, allowed this party to constitute itself as a "nationally oriented opposition" party.

In view of earlier attempts to recall its chairman, Vitazoslav Moric, the progressive differentiation within the party could have been anticipated, despite its election success. This differentiation was inevitable after the language law had been passed, that is, when the SNS Democratic platform—particularly, Slovak National Council Deputy Anton Hrnko—refused to push in an unconstitutional manner for the alternative drafted by the Slovak Heritage Foundation and distanced themselves from the attempts to cast doubts upon the legitimacy of the legislature. After these stormy events, the small, newly established, and—above all—more radically oriented factions of the nationalist movement revealed more vitality.

At present, they should become unified in the Party of Slovak Unity which Federal Assembly Deputy Stanislav Panis is also helping to found. In his opinion, the SNS has ceased to be an opposition party; this inspired him to leave it. The policy of his new party will allegedly contain

a "strong social codex", and he is openly formulating the demand for the establishment of a sovereign Slovak State.

Similar motives led Federal Assembly Deputy Eliska Zalezakova to leave the SNS—she cited the betrayal of the original ideas, the power struggle, and the disputes within the party as the principal reasons for her move. The Slovak National Democratic Movement—which also strives for the establishment of an independent Slovak state—seems to have slightly better prospects. Its founder, Petr Brnak, an independent Slovak National Council deputy, described it as a "child of the Democratic Party born from its national endeavors."

The process of crystallization within the SNS inspires a parallel with the former Communist Party where, after the change of its name, some of the members are sticking to their original positions. Yet another parallel can be drawn here—the radicals have sensed, above all in Slovakia, the prospects that are opening in front of those who build their career by criticizing the government's economic policy. Setting the radical elements aside provides a chance for these parties to, at last, integrate themselves into political life and gain corresponding authority.

Minister on Prospects of Slovak Building Industry

AU2002103391

[Editorial Report] Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak on 14 February on page 3 carries a 1,000-word interview with Jozef Dubnicek, Slovak minister of construction and the building industry, by Jan Comaj entitled "Clouds Over Construction." In the interview Dubnicek discusses the 1990 results and the prospects of the Slovak building industry.

Dubnicek says that a combination of "negative factors" (wear and tear of fixed assets, obsolete material and technology, insolvency of investors) accounts for the fact that "basic output in the building industry dropped by 3 billion korunas in Slovakia last year, as against 1989, which means a decline by over 10 percent." The output of the building materials industry declined by almost 10 percent, according to the minister.

In the interview, Dubnicek stresses the need for the inflow of foreign capital to modernize the production of building materials, stop the falling demand for new investment projects, and boost the export of Slovak building capacities. In this context he mentions that 47 enterprises co-owned by foreign partners are currently registered within his ministerial department. The foreign partners come from 15 different countries, most of them from Austria and the FRG. The value of the basic capital of these joint ventures is relatively low, however, totalling about 200 million korunas.

Speaking about the prospects of his sector, Dubnicek says that, as a cyclical industry, the building sector is particularly vulnerable in times of a recession. He expects that building output will decline further this year and that the industry may have to shed about 28 percent of its work force this year (20,000 construction workers, 11,000 workers from "non-construction activities," plus about 4,500 technical staff). He fears, however, that "the contribution of the building industry to the army of the unemployed could be even higher." Moreover, the decline of the building industry will cause additional job losses in the supplying branches.

In this context Dubnicek advocates "state orders" for the industry to "stabilize the volume of the building industry or at least slow down its decline." He believes that such a solution would be more efficient than the expenditure of state funds on retraining programs and unemployment benefits.

Reportage on Dienstbier Visit to Turkey

WA1902140091

For reportage on the visit by Jiri Dienstbier, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, to Turkey, including reports on his talks with Turkish President Turgut Ozal and Foreign Minister Kurtcebe Alptemocin on the Middle East, the Gulf war, and world peace, see the Turkey section of the 19 February West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Warsaw Pact Decision To Be Made 'Next Monday'

LD1802164291 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungary 1600 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] The Hungarian defense minister has reaffirmed that the countries concerned will make a decision next Monday in Budapest on the dissolution of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact. Lajos Fur told the Austrian paper PROFIL that the Hungarian participation in the Warsaw Pact was a formality anyway. Last year we did not take part in joint exercises, and the Hungarian Government recalled its representative to the Warsaw Pact command from Moscow.

The Hungarian defense minister said that a possible Hungarian declaration of neutrality would not meet with understanding now with the world's great powers, although, as he said, Hungary's full membership in NATO is also inconceivable. Lajos Fur believes that a possible rollback in the Soviet Union will not influence the processes in Eastern Europe, and will not constitute a danger to other regions of the world.

Defense Ministry Spokesman on Pact, Soviet Troops

LD1502155791 Budapest MTI in English 1359 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest, February 15 (MTI)—Co-operation, deterrence and defence are the buzzwords of Hungary's new defence code, which was approved at the government session on February 14. The Defence Ministry proposal, together with the security policy package of the Republic of Hungary, will come up for discussion in April, Lieutenant General Antal Annus, economic secretary of state at the Defence Ministry, has told a news conference.

The military organization of the Warsaw Treaty is to be dismantled by April 1, with the written consent of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. External circumstances calling for the elaboration of the new military code and the organization of an independent national army on the principle of deterrence implies the use of political, economic and other non-military methods of avoiding conflicts. It is necessary to conclude new military co- operation agreements with the neighbouring countries, including adequate security guarantees. Such a contract has already been signed with Romania and Czechoslovakia, and one with the Soviet Union is in the offing.

The new military doctrine is based on the principle of sufficient defence, meaning that there are no preconceived ideas about enemies, and a defensive approach will prevail in the military.

Antal Annus said that the new doctrine would entail re-groupings within the army and major cuts in strength in the second half of 1991. The new defence law is also to go before parliament this year, when the new service regulations and officer's training system will be adopted. Admissions to the military college have already been reduced by a third.

Answering a question, the lieutenant general said that a shift had taken place in the settlement of financial disputes surrounding the Soviet troops pull-out. The emissaries of the two governments are expected to sign an agreement next week on the procedure of handing over and appraising the emptied buildings, and surveying the environmental damage caused by Soviet troops. A Soviet-Hungarian joint committee could also be set up to decide the ways and means of fixing the value of buildings that do not comply with Hungarian standards, and are, therefore, considered worthless by the Hungarian side. (four-fifths of Soviet military facilities in Hungary fall into this category.)

The Hungarian standpoint is that payments can only be effected after the pull-out is complete. The Soviets put the value of real estates to be handed over at 1,200 million roubles, and are asking for half of the sum to be paid immediately, with the rest subject to subsequent talks.

End of Warsaw Pact, Soviet Relations Analyzed

AU1902142591 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 13 Feb 91 p 5

[Hanna Szalay editorial]

[Text] So, Moscow contributed to the demise of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact; therefore, suspicions that Moscow would try to postpone this step—with some kind of second thought—proved to be wrong. According to that "second thought," some people wanted to maintain the Pact as a formal trump card in case they decided to reestablish both the camp and the unit.

Mikhail Gorbachev addressed a letter to the leaders of the Warsaw Pact member countries, and he made it sound as though he were seizing the initiative by proposing to announce the demise of the Pact in April, rather than on 1 July, as previously suggested; he also proposed that the closing meeting be held by foreign ministers and defense ministers, rather than prime ministers. These kind of tactics are inherent to politicians, and they should not be held against Gorbachev. Furthermore, we are beginning to learn from experience that the sooner a decision is granted validity, the more likely it is to be implemented. Therefore, no one is going to blame Gorbachev for straying from the original agenda, even though this agenda was drawn up under a Hungarian initiative; moreover, the demise itself was a Hungarian idea, an alternative to the "perfectioning and modernization" of the Pact. As a newly elected prime minister, Jozsef Antall—whether by accident or by fate—became the next chairman in line of the Warsaw Pact political consultative committee, and he broached the subject of demise at the June 1990 meeting of the committee in

Moscow. He asked the committee to hold an extraordinary session in November 1990, in Budapest, to discuss this subject. Perhaps it was not to the "allies" that Gorbachev wanted to prove that he was in command; Gorbachev may well have wanted to overtake his own generals. Then—who knows?—we may again have found ourselves in a situation where we would feel grateful toward Gorbachev, in retrospect. Just as we felt grateful when he set us free. In that case, we would again have to struggle with the same dilemma: Are we dealing with a good or bad politician; with a realistic head of state, or with the victim of imperial and ideological prejudices? Maybe we will have to come to terms with the fact that there is no either/or. One person can represent this as well as that.

The disbanding of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact has been announced in advance, a date has been attached to it, which this implies something very important: The withdrawal of Soviet troops will definitely take place. Gorbachev's letter is a more concrete and solid guarantee than any kind of bilateral agreement, even if the letter does not actually mention the withdrawal. On the other hand, maybe all this represents a disadvantage for the Soviet republics that are trying to gain their independence; that is another question.

There can be no appearance of a deal whereby the former external buffer zone is granted its freedom, and a blind eye is turned toward the strengthening of the internal buffer zone (the Baltics, the so-called Western Belorussia, and the Western Ukraine, the former North Bukovina and Bessarabia.) Or, to put it another way, we cannot turn a blind eye to the crushing of independence and autonomy movements in the federated Soviet republics, particularly because the raison d'etre of the buffer zones—encouraged by the tsars and implemented by Stalin—has ceased to exist.

The small Warsaw Pact countries (especially the cooperation scheme that is now developing between Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland) should use what is left of the Warsaw Pact after the dismantling of the military organization—the Warsaw Pact as a political and consultative body—to convince Moscow of a few basic truths: Occupation is not the same thing as annexation; autonomous rights cannot be outwitted by presidential decrees; and the Soviet Union's road to Europe goes through the federated republics. This could give the tripartite cooperation scheme a new dimension in its efforts to attain European integration. This would be a truly European deed.

I am not thinking of direct support for secession attempts, because that would be a multiple infringement upon international law, which rests on the sanctity of the status quo ante. Such support would also create a lot of tension in bilateral relations. As it happens, Budapest needs its good relations with its ally, Moscow. Warsaw and Prague also need these good relations.

In his letter to Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, Gorbachev referred to the Paris Charter, the document elaborated at the November 1990 Paris summit of the CSCE. The charter acts as a model document on appropriate behavior in a Europe that is no longer divided. Among other things, the charter states that "security is indivisible, and the security of each participating state is indivisible from the security of all the other states." A few lines further on, the document states that "our relations are based on democratic values, on human rights, and on a joint commitment to basic freedoms."

The acquiescence to the demise of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact definitely reflects an acknowledgment of the contents of the Paris Charter. The leaders of a state configuration that claims to be an alliance of sovereign states should also apply the suggestions of the Paris Charter to their own people. The diplomats of the small Warsaw Pact countries could contribute to this process.

State Secretary Questioned on Army Changes

LD1702220191 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 1800 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Interview with Defense State Secretary Antal Annus by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Mr. State Secretary, with a few minutes and a stroke of the pen, the Warsaw Pact military organization will cease to exist as of 1 April. In spite of this, the armies are linked by thousands of threads.

There are two areas where fundamental changes will take place. One is that the Pact, which is still valid, will legally cease to exist. Although the military organization is not functioning in theory, there is still the possibility of everything that is regulated by the founding documents.

The second point is that the Hungarian defense force, the Hungarian Armed Forces, must be transformed in line with the needs of a sovereign Hungary. Earlier it was constructed and developed on the basis of the needs of the Warsaw Pact military demands.

The Warsaw Pact did not provide the defense of Hungary or that of other countries. Examples are 1956 in the case of Hungary, and 1968 in the case of Czechoslovakia. The way the Warsaw Pact operated was that the national militaries were an integral part of the Soviet Army. The national armies operated at the push of a button, and this button was pushed somewhere in the Soviet Union.

[Annus] What you said is exactly what is in question. I must add that, the decision of the Hungarian National Assembly, according to which the Hungarian Armed Forces can only be engaged in action on the basis of a decision by the National Assembly, in reality no longer works, because the Hungarian Armed Forces do not consider applicable the plans for their involvement in operations. They do not take part in joint military

exercises, do not hold such exercises, and there is no consent for such exercises to be held on Hungarian territory. In fact, the chief of staff no longer operates with respect to the defense officials, as stated in the terms of the basic provisions of the treaty. We reduced the number of staff officers working in Moscow from 25 to the current six. These engage in work concerning the winding up of the military organization.

[Reporter] The relations among the chiefs of staff will cease, but the links among soldiers will not cease with the Soviet Union, the Soviet Army, or—to word it more sharply—with the Soviet technology. I understand that even the language of the military air controls is Russian.

[Annus] The earlier friendship and mutual aid treaties will be replaced by new agreements that will be drafted in the spirit of good neighborliness, friendship, and cooperation. The military relations, until now determined by the Warsaw Pact, will also be replaced by something quite different.

Here there are some hard realities. The majority of the military techniques and equipments of the Hungarian Armed Forces are Soviet-made. For a few years we cannot even think about the Hungarian Armed Forces obtaining expensive, modern Western arms or armed systems; therefore, we have to make sure that these techniques and equipment are functional. We must make sure we have the parts and the necessary manpower for repairs and for the operation of these techniques.

SZDSZ Chairman on SFRY Arms Sale Affair

AU1902110591 Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET in Hungarian 12 Feb 91 p 4

[Interview with Janos Kis, chairman of the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), by Peter Kertesz; place and date not given: "The SZDSZ Continues To Demand An Exact Fact-Finding Investigation Into the Arms Sales"]

[Excerpts] [Kertesz] How satisfied is the Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ] with the television statement made by Prime Minister Jozsef Antall concerning the arms sales to Yugoslavia?

[Kis] Unfortunately, I found that the prime minister continued with tactics used by other government members; in other words, instead of presenting a complete factual report, Antall made a partial confession, and he also tried to gloss over the affair. In the end, his summary led us to believe that there had not really been any problems with this arms sale business, and that it was merely a formal error—namely, that only three state secretaries had signed the authorization documents when the documents should have been signed by five state secretaries. I do not understand, however, because if that were the case, then why did Prime Minister Jozsef Antall express his apologies to the Yugoslav federal prime minister? Indeed, if this was merely a procedural error, then that is a Hungarian domestic issue, and it has nothing to do with the Yugoslav Government. [passage omitted]

[Kertesz] Foreign Affairs Minister Geza Jeszenszky repeatedly stated that the Kalashnikovs were sold to Croatia without the government's knowledge. This denial greatly influenced the wave of protests against the government, as well as the SZDSZ statement that urged a personal drawing of consequences.

[Kis] On the basis of our information at the moment, we think the foreign minister should be questioned primarily because he played a leading role in trying to quiet the affair, and he mislead public opinion. At the same time, as far as the carrying out of the whole affair is concerned, we believe that it is Peter Boross, the current interior minister, who bears the political responsiblity—at the time of the events, Boross was a minister without portfolio, in charge of the National Security Office.

[Kertesz] So you believe that there is political responsibility?

[Kis] Yes, I believe that, from a legal point of view, the former director of the National Security Office bears the political responsibility, because his signature sanctioned the action.

[Kertesz] So, if I have understood correctly, the affair is not over yet. What is the SZDSZ planning? Do you think that the public knows more than it did before, now that the prime minister has made his statement?

[Kis] I did not find any new elements in the prime minister's statement. The SZDSZ still sees the need for an exact fact-finding report on the details of the arms sale. That is why we urge the creation of a parliamentary investigating committee. The SZDSZ has drawn up a long list of questions that still need to be answered, and we intend to present these unanswered questions to the investigating committee (if the National Assembly ever sets one up.) [passage omitted]

Slovak Leader Hopes Gabcikovo Will Be Reviewed

AU1302142091 Prague CTK in English 1302 GMT 9 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest Feb 9 (CTK correspondent)—Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar said last night he hoped that the controversial Czechoslovak-Hungarian Danube power-plant project would be discussed anew on government level.

Summing up his talks with Hungarian Prime Minister Joszef Antall on the first day of his visit to Hungary, dealing above all with the Gabcikovo-Nagymaros project, Meciar told a press conference that Hungary's intention to discuss the issue again was seen on the appointment of Minister Without Portfolio Ferenc Madl commissioner in charge of talks with Czechoslovak partners. Meciar said the future of the project was not so

much dependent on economic considerations or ecological objections as for Hungary it is a political issue. In Meciar's opinion it is necessary to break public opposition to finishing the project. Meciar said he was opposed to Hungary's withdrawal from the project costing Czechoslovakia 20,000 million korunas.

Meciar and Slovak National Council (parliament) Chairman Frantisek Miklosko are on a two-day visit to Hungary and will go to Slovenia on Sunday.

Slovak Minister Queried on Bilateral Relations

AU1902090991 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 11 Feb 91 p 5

[Interview with Slovak International Relations Minister Milan Knazko by Tibor Ferko in Budapest on 9 February: "Active in the Development of Neighborly Relations"; first paragraph is NARODNA OBRODA introduction]

[Text] Following the [Slovak government and parliamentary] visit to Hungary and just before the [minister's] departure for Yugoslavia in the upheaval accompanying a social event of the first magnitude at the Czechoslovak Embassy residence in Budapest, NARODNA OBRODA reporter addressed Slovak International Relations Minister Milan Knazko:

[Ferko] Mr. Minister, to a great extent, your talks in Budapest concerned [ethnic] minorities, and I know from Minister Dienstbier that this issue was listed as one under the jurisdiction of the federal body. What is the actual situation?

[Knazko] Actually, the power-sharing law specifies that the minorities living in Slovakia are within the jurisdiction of the Slovak government.

[Ferko] So, this information resulted from the minister's unawareness.

[Knazko] It depends on the date when he offered this information.

[Ferko] Approximately three weeks ago.

[Knazko] I am afraid that regarding this issue we are talking at cross purposes. Moreover, the problems of minorities are not a simple issue in a single republic or state. It is a problem, the solution to which must be coordinated among all European countries participating in the Copenhagen Conference on the Human Dimension. Our obligation is to maintain our ethnic minorities' policy at the standard European level.

[Ferko] Did you and the Hungarian partners understand each other regarding this issue?

[Knazko] Basically yes, but there were tendencies promoting a cooperation on a bilateral principle. We cannot accept such an approach because we believe that in the relationship between two states it is not possible to practice different policies pertaining to only one minority. We must respect provisions adopted in all European countries. Every state has an obligation to care for its citizens, and minorities are above all members of that particular state. The state must guarantee them all rights and at the same time demand that they fulfill their duties to the state.

[Ferko] Can you tell us something about specific steps in this area?

[Knazko] No specific bilateral agreement on the minority issue has been reached. Perhaps, it is worth mentioning that should the Hungarian Government ask for assistance, we are willing to provide it. It should not become a matter of course and, more importantly, it should not be a financial assistance.

[Ferko] The ministry you are in charge of is of particular importance now, when in the European states the regional policy is being developed. What were your achievements prior to the visit in Yugoslavia?

[Knazko] We took part in the conference of the Association of European Region in Strasbourg on 5 to 6 December. On the first day, we were attending as observers only but on the second day we became a full member of the organization. It associates 165 European regions. Moreover, we already negotiated with Walloon and signed a preliminary agreement. A similar agreement with Catalonia is under preparation. Recently, we visited Bavaria and Lower Saxony. Now, following the sojourn in Hungary, we are going to visit Slovenia, the representation of which visited Slovakia two months ago. This date for our visit was arranged at that time. In our endeavors, we are not concerned only with Slovenia, we rather want to cooperate with all interested Yugoslav republics.

[Ferko] Is your position complicated by the planned proclamation of independence of the Slovene Republic?

[Knazko] If I am to tell the truth, it was pointed out to us that it would be better if we waited until the situation in Yugoslavia clears up and becomes more straightforward. Considering the matter, however, led us to the conclusion that a possibility exists of the situation becoming even more complex and obfuscated. That should not make any difference in the bilateral relations between our republics. We do not want to interfere in their internal affairs. We want to maintain good-neighborly relations, confirm the existing ones, of which, particularly in the area of economy, there are many, and establish new relations as well.

Soviet Trade Payment Problems Crippling Business

LD1802172791 Budapest MTI in English 1611 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest, February 18 (MTI)—Payment difficulties on the Soviet side are all but crippling Hungarian-Soviet trade.

Deliveries were rather one-sided both in January and February of this year, with Hungary importing 80 million US dollars' worth of goods.

Hungarian exports to the Soviet Union so far this year will total less than 20-30 million USD, experts are predicting.

The two countries dollarized trade with effect January 1 this year.

The chief obstacle in the way of balanced deliveries is that Soviet importers are unable to provide the required payment guarantees, that is, they cannot open letters of credit at Hungarian commercial banks.

According to Soviet Foreign Economic Bank data, l/cs worth a total of 17.142 million USD and 100,000 DM [Deutsche mark] have been opened in Hungary, an official of the Soviet Bank's representation in Hungary told MTI.

But he could not give details about a recent Hungarian media report that Prime Minister Pavlov last week ordered the competent Soviet organizations to open 150 million US dollars' worth of l/cs, in installments, for Hungarian exporters.

Laszlo Timar, a senior Hungarian Ministry of International Economic Relations official, considered the information "unlikely" in view of Soviet payment difficulties.

The National Bank of Hungary and the Ministry of International Economic Relations are now trying to work out some sort of clearing system with the Soviet Union.

If approved by both sides, such a system would make it possible for Hungarian companies to export to the Soviet Union to at least the value of Soviet imports to Hungary.

Soviet officials, however, have so far been rejecting the idea of such solutions.

Goncz Addresses National Assembly on Amnesty Law

LD1902104291 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 0810 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Speech by President Arpad Goncz, on the occasion of presenting a bill on exercising general anmesty, to the National Assembly session in Budapest—live]

[Text] Esteemed National Assembly, I apologize for claiming your precious time to debate the submitted bill, precisely now when the National Assembly's feverish legislative activity is focused on issues touching on the fundamentals of life in the country. May my excuse be that I wish to submit to you—availing myself of my constitutional rights and at the request of Dr. Kalman Gyorgyi, chief prosecutor—a proposal that does not constitute a law, but declares a right, because it lays down a real situation in correct legal form.

You know that, as the closing gesture of the taxi drivers' blockade, on the basis of the agreement that came about between representatives of government and the drivers. The government stated: It does not urge that punitive proceedings be initiated against participants in the blockade. What makes the submission of this proposal topical is that the government intention, which, in practice, has been asserted consistently, has not until now assumed a legal form.

Allow me to add some words of explanation. According to the current Hungarian legal code in as much as the authorities taking action in penal affairs detect thoroughly grounded suspicion of crimes having been committed, they are obligated to conduct proceedings. This means that the police, as the general investigative authority, are obligated to conduct the investigation; the prosecutor is obligated to lodge charges; and the court must issue a verdict. This principle is expressed by the second clause of the Law on Penal Proceedings, when it lays down the principle of proceedings ex officio. On the basis of this principle, the authorities have no chance of weighing up whether or not a prosecution is justified.

The principle of proceedings ex officio is a principle that is generally known and accepted in international practice; however, the various legal systems provide various solutions to the question of what should happen if the enforcement of the state's penal code causes greater damage to the state than if this requirement is not enforced.

There is a known and living practice for this situation in a considerable portion of Western European laws; it is a principle called the principle of opportunities. According to it, the authorities taking action in penal cases can, for reasons of expediency, refrain from a penal prosecution.

Regarding the events that give topicality to the Law on General Amnesty, we can see that a large number of citizens, presumably several hundred thousand conducted themselves in a manner that the penal authorities regard as criminal. In this case, a political decision must first be made; the state must decide whether or not—as has happened in this case—it wishes for the presumably several hundred thousand people to be prosecuted.

There is no intermediary solution because the principle of equality before the law would be violated if only a few presumed perpetrators were to be called to account, and not every one who played an active role in the events. Inasmuch as the state decides that it does not wish to prosecute because greater damage would be caused by enforcing the penal code than by not doing so, according

to the Hungarian laws in force there is one sole possibility for this and this is by exercising general amnesty.

Because the Hungarian legal system does not apply the principle of opportunitas in penal affairs, the police, as the investigative authority, have no right to not take action in cases when the law would otherwise stipulate this. On the basis of all of this, the current Hungarian law, the sole possible means of asserting the state wish to not prosecute is for there to be a law on general amnesty.

Allow me to add to this that I agree with and accept without reservation the positions of approval or rejection taken by the National Assembly's Constitutional, Legislative, and Justice Committee in connection with the modification proposals that emerged in the course of discussion. I would like to hope that the esteemed National Assembly will enact the submitted bill, and that, in this manner, we will manage to bring to a close an issue that has remained unresolved for months, and that we can finnally transcend, in a correct legal form, on the basis of national consensus, this much disputed episode of our contemporary history. Thank you for your patience.

General Amnesty Law Adopted

LD1902132291 Budapest MTI in English 1247 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest, February 19 (MTI)—After a four-hour debate, parliament accepted the bill on general amnesty, which was presented to the Tuesday session by Arpad Goncz, president of the Republic.

Under the law, the taxi drivers and private hauliers who protested against the petrol price rises by blockading the roads of the country between October 25 to 28 last year will be exempted from prosecution. On the proposal of an MP [Member of parliament] the law was amended by the stipulation that the general amnesty would no longer remain in effect for those who commit any malicious crime in the next five years.

SZDSZ Ready To Assume Government Duties

LD1602232291 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 2100 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Interview with Janos Kis, Alliance of Free Democrats chairman, by Janos Hollos; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] The Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ] has declared for the first time that it is ready to assume governmental responsibility. After their general assembly, SZDSZ Chairman Janos Kis spoke to our staff member Janos Hollos:

[Kis] One of the speakers said that this delegates' meeting is historic because for the first time the SZDSZ has declared that it will assume governmenal responsibility. Really, the present government is so insensitive vis-a-vis public opinion and so insensitive vis-a-vis the realities, so much so that by building on its now comfortable parliamentary majority, it does what it likes, and one cannot trust it to lead the country out of its deepening crisis. It follows from this that the SZDSZ as an opposition party is obligated to show that it can represent an alternative vis-a-vis this government, and it is obligated to declare that if the situation develops that way, then it is ready to take part in government. A significant proportion of public wants the government to go. We think that a change of government ust only be brought about by democratic means. For this the present government majority must dwindle.

[Hollos] Does this mean that perhaps you will now set up a shadow government?

[Kis] Either within the present legislation or after an eventual new election, only a coalition government is conceivable. For this reason there is no sense in the SZDSZ lining up a potential SZDSZ government, but we naturally do want to show that we have people capable of governing.

[Hollos] In a few of the speeches it was said there is a real danger that the people might throw the government out. Do you believe that the government's situation is this serious?

[Kis] We cannot preclude this possibility, either. The question is whether the country will fall with the government or not. This depends on whether it will be possible to achieve a change of government by democratic means before the very grave processes unfold, processes which one may safely say threaten with catastrophe. The government is not capable of lifting the country out of its crisis. Moreover, it is aggravating the country's crisis.

FKgP's Nagy Addresses Kecskemet Rally

LD1702222491 Budapest MTI in English 1937 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest, February 17 (MTI)—The population notes with bitter disappointment that the anticipated change has not taken place in economic life, and even the peaceful shift in political system has transcended into a salvation of the old regime, Jozsef Ferenc Nagy, national president of the Independent Smallholders [FKgP], party and minister without portfolio, told a rally in Kecskemet on Sunday.

Nagy pointed out that the reshuffle took place only on top level, but not at the lower and middle ones, with economic power being in the hands of persons committed to the previous party state. He stated that the Smallholders would insist on their programme declared during the parliamentary elections in this respect, too.

With regard to the issue of compensation, the party's position remains unchanged, but they are ready for certain compromises to promote the early settlement of landed property relations. For instance, they accept as a compensation the bond system which in their view is

totally alien to the thinking of the Hungarian people, but only on the condition that the former owners will get back their land against the bond without any difficulties.

Weekly Foreign Ministry Briefing Reported

LD1802113991 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 1100 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Our correspondent Istvan Kulcsar reports on the regular Monday news briefing by Foreign Ministry spokesman Janos Hermann:

[Kulcsar] The spokesman officially announced that all the participants have given their assent that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministries of the Warsaw Pact member states should meet in Budapest next week to decide on the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact's military organization on 1 April.

On the occasion of a Council of Europe session, Foreign Minister Geza Jeszenszky will in the coming days meet Romanian Foreign Minister Adrian Nastase in Madrid to discuss bilateral relations.

Janos Hermann also made known that the widow of Istvan Horthy has contacted the Hungarian Embassy in Lisbon concerning the return of Miklos Horthy's [regent of Hungary between the wars] ashes. The Foreign Ministry and its organizations treat this in exactly the same way as they would a similar case of any other person. Hungarian governmental services, the spokesman said, do not wish to take part in the matter beyond this.

New Labor Minister on Tasks, Unemployment

AU1502143091 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 11 Feb 91 pp 1,7

[Interview with Labor Affairs Minister Gyula Kiss by Szilvia Hamor; place and date not given: "This Will Be A Hard Year"; first paragraph is NEPSZABADSAG introduction]

[Excerpts] The 37-year-old lawyer Gyula Kiss made it into Hungarian political life barely one year ago. His meteoric career included the position of minister without portfolio in charge of compensation affairs and the position of deputy chairman of the Smallholders' Party. He has been the new Labor Affairs minister for one month. [passage omitted]

[Hamor] Although positive processes have already begun, unemployment is a side effect that could hinder the development of these positive processes. Do you have the necessary means to reduce these side effects?

[Kiss] In my opinion, the Labor Affairs Ministry is working properly, and the government is aware of the social policy weight of this issue. According to our estimates, we need about 31 billion forints this year to implement the employment policy. There are 12.6 billion forints available in the employment policy fund, and the National Assembly approved 9 billion forints in the solidarity fund to serve as a source of unemployment allowance. In other words, we received the sums that were "potentially" included in the budget; however, all this only makes up 21 billion forints. It remains to be seen whether the National Assembly will approve the contributions to be paid by both employees and employers, contributions that we incorporated into the employment law. This would cover the missing 8 or 9 billion forints. [passage omitted]

[Hamor] In his first statement, the political state secretary of the Labor Affairs Ministry said he was a follower of Mrs. Thatcher, and claimed that we could solve unemployment by forcing these people to become entrepreneurs.

[Kiss] I would not put it so categorically, although the issue pointed out by the state secretary is very important. In addition to this proposal, however, a lot of other employment policy means should emerge.

[Hamor] What do you mean?

[Kiss] It would be useless to point out one or two of these employment policy means. Instead, I believe in emphasizing the local conditions and possibilities. In my view, public utility work has not been adequately used so far. Local interests meet with the interests of the unemployed in this type of activity. [passage omitted]

[Hamor] How will you be able to pay the unemployment benefits for an estimated number of 200,000 or 260,000 unemployed by the end of this year, if the National Assembly refuses to approve the solidarity fund payments?

[Kiss] I hope the deputies will be responsible enough to approve this contribution. If not, the aforementioned fund will still begin to function, but the existing money will not last more than six months. It is difficult to give an exact answer to the question of what will happen next. Foreign projects could be one way of "escape." These projects could fulfill tasks that should be solved by means of the employment fund. It is still difficult to come up with concrete measures. In any case, in my activity, I will deal more with the possibilities that have not yet been properly exhausted. We will sign such an agreement with Denmark soon. [passage omitted]

Commentary Hails End of Pact Military Structures

AU1902191891 Warsaw POLSKA ZBROJNA in Polish 14 Feb 91 p 2

[Jerzy Markowski commentary: "Dismantling the Warsaw Pact"]

[Text] The fact that the Warsaw Pact is dying is nothing new. Its military death has been obvious to many countries except Moscow, which spent a long time trying to administer "artificial respiration" to it, using military air. Moscow has finally conceded that there is no way of resuscitating the "patient," and a good thing too, because anything that is artificial and unnatural creates unnecessary animosity and irritation.

M. Gorbachev's letter to L. Walesa shows that Moscow has accepted the idea of dissolving the military structures of the Warsaw Pact. One can be even more certain about that because V. Havel and J. Antall have received similar letters. All that is left is the question of time, but even the maximum length of time was established on 1 April. One ought to believe that this will occur quickly, especially because a working team has been working on this matter ever since the last meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, and has almost completed its work.

Remembering that Moscow has been putting off a meeting of Warsaw Pact leaders ever since October and that this meeting has still not taken place, the present Soviet written initiative shows that the liquidation of the pact's military structures is approaching fast. It means that such cells as the Defense Ministers Committee, Warsaw Pact Military Council, Military Scientific-Technological Council, and Joint Warsaw Pact Armed Forces Command are ceasing to exist, together with their headquarters kin Moscow. The practical consequence of this is the end of joint military exercises and, more importantly, the reinstatement of complete sovereignty by our Armed Forces at least in a formal sense, because in a practical sense our Armed Forces have already had this sovereignty for a long time.

The obvious question to ask is: What will there be instead? A delicate sphere like security detests any kind of vacuum, and this vacuum is feared by the Russians and the West alike, all the more so because there is still no all-European security system, and creating such a system is very difficult. Everyone has noticed that. Notice that Western politicians are not insisting on the total elimination of the Warsaw Pact at all. The only people doing so are overzealous journalists, for purely emotional reasons. Even official statements contain numerous discrepancies that make a mystery out of the whole issue. Therefore it should be said openly that the elimination of Warsaw Pact military structures does not mean an automatic elimination of the entire Warsaw Pact. Even this military phase has to take time. It cannot happen overnight. Just the settlement of accounts is a time-consuming process.

In the present situation, the only alternative to the dissolved Pact structures is a series of bilateral agreements which would include military clauses. The possibility of something like this has now arisen. Although no one has said so clearly, good military relations with Moscow are also necessary because the Soviet equipment presently in use in the Polish Army is going to last a long time and will require spare parts. Where would we train our rocket forces if we do not have a single missile training area and will not have one in future? Or consider practice missile attacks by our pilots. All these things used to be organized by the Warsaw Pact. That is why a new agreement on the basis of sovereignty and independence, an agreement between a small country and a large one, is an objective necessity for us. Of course, further cooperation depends on the way our mutual political relations develop, based on a respect of each other's sovereignty as well as mutual needs and advantages. Therefore one can assume there will also be an agreement like this with Moscow. It would be a grave mistake to erase everything and leave it at that, as some people would wish. That would merely create the problem of what comes next, and what comes next has to be seen clearly, not through a haze.

As far the Warsaw Pact changes are concerned, a highly significant commentary was broadcast by REUTER: "NATO's initial reaction is indifference. The collapse of the USSR-led organization is already causing problems for NATO, which now has to find a new role for itself after decades of East-West confrontation." We welcome the partial dismantling of the Warsaw Pact because whatever does not suit our conditions has to be rejected, and the future has to be built realistically and on new foundations. That is what is needed. What is more, it is possible.

Military Service Deferments Explained

LD1502144591 Warsaw Domestic Service in Polish 1134 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Response by Defense Minister Piotr Kolodziejczyk to a question in the Sejm posed by Deputy Serafin on deferment of military service—live]

[Text] Mr. Speaker, may it please the House. In principle, this is a reply to a question posed by Deputy Serafin, and I would like to begin by thanking the deputy for enabling me to explain in the House certain misunderstandings that have grown in relation to this issue. I also fear that the deputy himself has, to some extent, become a victim of these misunderstandings, as, ladies and gentlemen, when it is a question of the basic military service of farmers, absolutely no changes have been made, and no such changes are anticipated in the near future. Similarly, as far as I know, the draft amendments to the law on the conscription service do not anticipate any general changes. The government's law on this subject continues to be in force today, and will be in the near future, and therefore the previous rules of play apply.

I would also like to take this opportunity to draw your attention, ladies and gentlemen, to certain phenomena which must raise anxiety. In just this past year, the number of farmers qualifying for deferment of military service by right of running their farms has risen by 33 percent. Whether this fragmentation or atomization of farms is a healthy phenomenon is not for me to say. It seems, however, that it conflicts with the state's agricultural policy, which should aim at the integration of farms.

The issue of sole providers is a complex and difficult one and has its own history. Please believe me when I say that making this decision and issuing instructions, and their introduction into basic military service, caused great discomfort to the one making this decision. However, please also note that the minister for national defense is responsible for the size of the Army at an agreed level, and he must take advantage of the legal instruments at his disposal in order to fulfill this general task.

Ladies and gentlemen, since 1989 sole providers of families have had their duty to do basic military service deferred. In just one year the number of deferments in this respect rose quite considerably. Regarding families of 19-year-olds this figure is alarming, as it has risen more than twelvefold within one year. I fear, therefore, that this phenomenon may cause public anxiety.

This year, in view of the state of public security, the need has arisen to strengthen the police force—hence the additional requirement for a conscript quota. That is why the decision about the conscription of sole providers was an unavoidable one. At the same time, I would like to point out that this is not a ruthless or unconditional conscription. It is assumed that persons maintaining more than two people will not be conscripted into the Army. In addition, of course, there are individual cases, which should be handled with great care by regional conscription commissions. At this point I will also explain a misunderstanding that I often have to deal with: namely, that it is often commissions containing representatives of the local authorities, and not military conscription commissions, that make the appraisal, and a great deal depends here upon their honesty.

Regarding the fulfillment of basic military service within the police force, [words indistinct] this cannot take place on an administrative basis, of automatically directing a quota of young people to service within the force. This must be a volountary act, apart from which we assume that precisely this is an opportunity for the sole providers of families to be able to fulfill their obligations while also being paid and, generally speaking, close to their place of residence.

I would not like to bore you, ladies and gentlemen, with figures and statistics, but to supplement the Armed Forces this year, taking into consideration both population and the number of deferments, we were short of 17,300 people. The needs of the police force are shaping up on the level of 16,800 people. There are 32,000 people who are granted deferment on the basis of being sole provider of families. Please balance these figures yourselves.

Taking this opportunity I would like to inform you, ladies and gentlemen, that a category of sole providers of families is only a fraction of the problem of deferments, because as far as farmers are concerned the figure for today is 32,500 people; on the basis of schooling 115,000 people; those maintaining families—well, this remains unchanged—there are about 1,800 people.

Moreover, ladies and gentlemen, making the military service universal—the fact that every citizen should be equal before the law—is a condition for starting work on shortening, clearly shortening, the military service. There is the change for this—provided, however, that two conditions are fulfilled. Condition one: The universality of the duty with relation to the homeland, the duty to serve the basic military service. Condition two: The introduction of contractual service. A draft for such a solution has already been submitted to the Sejm; it aims to regulate the professional service in the Armed Forces. There is a chance for the further shortening of this service, it being universal. For the time being these chances are only mathematical. It is only on condition, however, that the professional service and contractual service will solve the problem of manning the more and more sophisticated equipment in the Army. So much by way of explanation. I do not know whether you feel satisfied with my explanation.

New Defense Bill Implications Discussed

AU2002094091 Warsaw POLSKA ZBROJNA in Polish 12 Feb 91 pp 1,2

[Interview with Deputy Jacek Szymanderski, deputy chairman of the Sejm National Defense Commission, by Colonel Marek Sieniawski; place and date not given: "What New Elements Will the National Defense Law Bring?"]

[Excerpts] [Sieniawski] What factors influenced the Sejm's Defense Commission to look at existing legislation on state defense, especially the area dealing with compulsory military service?

[Szymanderski] The main reason was that when the Mazowiecki government was still in office, we received a short draft proposing amendments to the law on compulsory military service. Its aim was to ensure that the Armed Forces become apolitical and non-party. Talks with the Ministries of Labor and Education have confirmed that it will be necessary to amend paragraphs on students' military training and substitute welfare service. We have produced a broader draft that aims at wider changes. The National Defense Commission has now concluded its work.

[Sieniawski] How will the new legislation effect the way our Armed Forces function and will it only relate to the Army?

[Szymanderski] The law on compulsory military service is being rewritten. We decided to look more closely at the financing of the military. Until now the Armed Forces could draw on other sources of finance, namely, a reservist who was called up for his military service continued to receive his pay from his enterprise. We feel that every citizen should bear the burden of defense costs. We cannot allow private employers to shoulder more of the cost. We all pay taxes, and this should provide the necessary finance. The Armed Forces should pay for everything. Additionally, we want to lay the foundations that will assist us to reorganize the Armed Forces and lead to the introduction of a 12-month period of compulsory national service.

[Sieniawski] What are the chances of success?

[Szymanderski] What Minister Kolodziejczyk said in Belweder was pure pre-election propaganda. We have certainly not received any proposal from the Ministry of National Defense about a military run on professional lines. Without such top-to-bottom professionalism it will be impossible to introduce the 12-month compulsory service period. This would cost even more money and the turnaround of fully trained professional career soldiers would be common.

[Sieniawski] What do you propose?

[Szymanderski] We would like to see technical subject students qualify for Armed Forces study grants and continue their studies while doing their military service. They would then agree to serve in the Armed Forces for a further five consecutive years or multiples thereof. The benefits would be enormous, because such a soldier is familiar with military equipment and accidents are fewer. The level of competence of young soldiers would rise, because there would be more and better trained noncommissioned officers. This principle holds good in many specializations. A professional and career military service means that we will have a pool of better trained personnel, and the men who are doing their compulsory military service would be the less qualified supporting staff. [passage omitted]

[Sieniawski] What about other fundamental changes?

[Szymanderski] Civil defense will cease to be the Army's domain. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, or someone else, will have to organize a new department dealing with this area.

[Sieniawski] Why not the Army?

[Szymanderski] Society has to be told that civil defense really only exists on paper. It is a service which is noneffective and a waste of money. It must be professionalized. The total incompetence of such formations in, for example, Armenia after the earthquake, shows how important it is to have a service of this type professionally and well prepared to render assistance to the civil population. We have 30 chemical plants situated in cities and approximately 20 water dams and many other dangerous installations. We are simply not prepared for these sort of potential dangers and that is why we must create special rescue services.

[Sieniawski] Perhaps we should look to the West for a model?

[Szymanderski] In the West, civil defense is not the responsibility of the Army. In the final sections we are recommending that civil defense be abolished when we create specialized rescue services. As yet we have no official name for such a service. Deputy Kosmalski, a member of the commission is coordinating the preparation of the legal aspects.

[Sieniawski] Does this mean that the Army will not have any links with the civilian population?

[Szymanderski] We debated this aspect in order to show the sort of obligations the Army can impose on the civilian population. For example, at times of natural catastrophe or special circumstances. The population must be informed beforehand, however, through legislation. Up until now nobody has bothered to do this.

[Sieniawski] That is to say that all actions must have an appropriate legal framework.

[Szymanderski] This is especially important for the soldier's legal protection. We accept the principle, as the West does, that citizens are obliged to do national service. There are exceptions, of course. That is why the law will have provisions that discourage employers from employing anyone who has not done his military service. It will also seek to discourage marriage before military service. The young recruit who has to do his military service soon after marriage is in a tragic situation. Both he and his young wife suffer, because they are separated for over 18 months. Young people must accept that they must first do their military service, then marry. We will not, however, be introducing prewar-type regulations that, regarding marriage, did not in any way mitigate the duties of a soldier.

[Sieniawski] How will students be trained?

[Szymanderski] Military training for students is to be abolished, other than in Naval Academies and Medical Academies. After completion of their studies, the students will undergo six months of training. After graduating, one is sufficiently well trained that in a short space of time one can become a reserve officer. If we pass the law on professional soldiers, it will allow many young men from various professional backgrounds to join the Army, do further training, and later pursue civilian careers. The experience of the West is that an engineer who has worked in the Army for several years is a sought-after commodity. In this way we shall also have a pool of very good reserve officers.

[Sieniawski] If money is being spent on the security of the state, this means not just the standing Army, but the whole potential of reservists.

[Szymanderski] It is often said that one has to do one's military service in order to experience life and become a good citizen. This was so before the war, and quite rightly. In this modern world, things have changed. People are now being educated to expect a time of peace. The military is an instrument that allows Poland to exercise its sovereignty in international relations, defends the nation in times of danger, and protects property and lives. Nowadays, one learns how to be a good citizen elsewhere.

[Sieniawski] Is this part of the philosophy in the new law on military service?

[Szymanderski] Yes. There are many such issues, for example, the pragmatism of professional soldiers. One cannot be a member of a political party, nor can one organize trade unions. In return, the state will protect the interests of career soldiers and will establish the institution of a spokesman for soldiers' rights. All this must be clearly set out and regulated. [passage omitted]

[Sieniawski] As a result of restructuring, many able and qualified people have left the Army. How can we now attract good people to think of an Army career?

[Szymanderski] Let us be honest about this. There are still many people in the Army who made their careers by being in the party. Many are incompetent and old. These people are thinking how to keep their posts. The best way to do this is to get rid of the competition. They therefore made full use of Mazowiecki's policy of letting bygones be bygones and have managed to get rid of many younger people to protect themselves from the coming changes.

[Sieniawski] Do you think the new legislation will change everything?

[Szymanderski] Legislation will only give a framework, it does not provide minute details. The executive authorities do this through orders and decrees. If the philosophy of the Armed Forces leadership does not change, nothing will change. The legislation will make it difficult to return to former days, but much will depend on the central authorities.

[Sieniawski] The National Defense Commission has heard the views of military advisers. How were these people selected?

[Szymanderski] The choice was large. In July 1990, the Citizens Deputies Club and I organized a seminar to which many officers were invited. I felt they presented the military case honestly and can say that we have good military advisers. I would like to mention some excellent lawyers from the Ministry of Defense Legal Department, for example, Colonels Nalazkowski and Spiewak. Thanks to many discussions we were able to consider and put forward all that is good and acceptable. We owe a great deal to many advisers who cooperated with us soon after the new Sejm was formed, despite the fact that they ran the risk of being accused of collaboration (General Siwicki did not look favorably on such contacts). The prime minister, on the other hand, did not thank us for relying on such cooperation. I would like to mention Colonels Ryszard Jakubczak, Stanislaw Kozieja, Julian Babula, and Tadeusz Lokiec. We are indebted to these people. At present, we have requested General Stelmaszuk to give us people who can help us with specific areas. Our relations with the General Staff are good.

[Sieniawski] Are you not afraid that some of those advisers may have said what they were instructed to say or represented their own point of view or the interests of some small groups?

[Szymanderski] There is always that danger, but the members of the commission could also be presenting incorrect views. When one is a politician, one becomes sensitive to the lines of division that run between various interest groups. The advisers we listened to we have found to be credible and well-meaning.

[Sieniawski] Can you give an example?

[Szymanderski] For example, the Ministry of National Defense is against the introduction of a professional Army. The minister has said that this is not likely to happen before year 2000. The ministry is putting forward arguments that it will require much more training, and so on. Why is it doing this? Simply, because the Armed Forces we have now require a large bureaucracy, thus, a large number of administrative posts. Ordinary people must be told about these things, because it is the nation that pays for the Armed Forces, not the other way round. Those who pay have the right to demand value for their money. This fact has to be articulated clearly and publicly.

[Sieniawski] Nowadays, the people have to be convinced about the importance of defense issues. How do you intend to put forward arguments so that they reach the public and of course people who serve in the Armed Forces?

[Szymanderski] When one has a situation in which there are absolutely no threats on any political horizon, people quite correctly lose interest in the Armed Forces. But please note the current wave of interest. This is not simply a result of the most modern military gadgetry currently being used in the Gulf war, but also the fact that something is beginning to happen in Lithuania and the specific situation of the Soviet Army in Germany. We fear this army, and this inclines us to be more generous with our money for national defense. It may happen that our situation will deteriorate to such an extent that we will be forced to turn to the nation for more money. As a deputy I would like to say the following, and I would like this to appear in full: "No matter how unpopular it might prove in government circles, I shall always endeavor to tell the people how

things really are, namely, whether their financial contributions are effective or whether the system of organization and direction means that their money is being wasted."

[Sieniawski] The mass media has recently been covering defense issues quite extensively.

[Szymanderski] Yes. The need is there and so is the public's interest. People want to have an efficient Army. So that—for the small sum we allocate on defense (we cannot afford to spend large amounts)—it can prepare itself to protect us against all the dangers that it is able to protect us. Not to waste money on unnecessary bureaucracy and military institutions and not to dream of protecting us against those things against which it cannot defend us. This has to be said. [passage omitted]

[Sieniawski] When will the bill become law?

[Szymanderski] We and the Sejm Legislation Commission believe that everything will be ready by mid-March 1991, although a lot of amendments will have to be made elsewhere in existing legislation. For example, we have accepted that a soldier who has been given a prison sentence, must go serve his time there and thereafter will have to finish his military service. It has become obvious that we will have to make changes in the Criminal Code. We are finding that there will be many knock-on effects of this type.

[Sieniawski] Do you not think that more issues should be discussed more broadly and in public?

[Szymanderski] When the bill is finalized and is being discussed in the Sejm, I will send out copies—before the second reading—to various units and military institutions to get further views and suggestions. A lot of people have worked on this piece of legislation. All enquiries and letters will be gladly accepted. Perhaps POLSKA ZBROJNA, which in the past has treated me with some suspicion, could publicize this defense issue and initiate a wider public discussion. I will gladly reply to letters and discuss details. The whole process will have a positive input to defense issues.

Group Protests Conscientious Objector Conscription

LD1702220491 Warsaw PAP in English 1816 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Warsaw, Feb. 17—Following cases of conscientious objectors being deprived of the possibility to perform alternative military service, a possibility which Polish law stipulates, the National Executive Commission of the "ROAD" Citizen's Movement-Democratic Action has issued a statement reading in part:

"The scandalous interpretations of conscription commissions render (this law) idle.... The right to reject military service is the inalienable right of man recognized by the U.N. All around the world in countries where, like in Poland, this law was recognized, the Army builds its prestige through more humane and more attractive military service."

"ROAD," formed following a split in Solidarity and today one of the major opposition groupings, favours a career army.

Miners March, Demonstrate for 'Equal Treatment'

LD1502113791 Warsaw PAP in English 2303 GMT 14 Feb 91

[Text] Warsaw, Feb 14—More than 2,000 miners from various regions of Poland marched in front of the Belvedere Palace, government offices and the buildings of parliament to protest against deteriorating living conditions and discriminatory policies of the government.

Leader of the Federation of Miners' Trade Unions which organized the manifestation Rajmunmd Moric handed over to President Lech Walesa a petition calling for the equal treatment of all enterprises as concerns the wage growth tax. Miners demanded also that the president should meet with miners and steps be taken to halt recession.

The president and the premier pledged to meet with miners but stressed that their activities must follow law.

"We called on the Sejm to better control the government and halt further recession," Moric said after the demonstration.

In another development, the leader of the citizens' Parliamentary Caucus Mieczyslaw Gil met with protesting miners here today to discuss postulates concerning the lifting of the excessive wage tax and the introduction of more efficient solutions paticularly in industry.

State Farm Workers Begin Strike 18 Feb

LD1802150991 Warsaw PAP in English 1214 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Warsaw, Feb. 18—In line with earlier declarations, workers of state farms associated in the national strike committee based in Rzepin, western Poland went on strike today. The work of the committee is coordinated by the Federation of Trade Unions of Farm Workers.

Last week's protests in state farms were organized by Solidarity of Slupsk Voivodship, northern Poland.

Sejm Elections To Take Place 'After Vacations'

AU2002110591 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 15 Feb 91 p 2

['J.F.'report: "The Elections—After The Vacations?"]

[Text] It has been calculated that the next possible date for the elections is in 120 or so days' time.

At an extraordinary meeting on 14 February, the Sejm Constitutional Commission discussed the election calendar and made decisions concerning the election rules.

The Commission voted that further work on the election rules would be based on variant C, i.e. the German

system. This variant calls for proportional representation by 345 deputies, and a further 115 deputies in single-seat voting districts gathered into 15 regions.

It goes without saying that 14 days from the official start of the campaign are required to appoint the State Election Commission, after which the Commission must appoint further regional and district commissions. After that, between 30 and 50 days are required to register the candidates, after which another 10 days are required to publish the voting lists and print all the stationery. Finally, between 60 and 90 days are needed for the candidates to hold their election campaigns. On top of all this, legal experts are calling for another 30 days of vacatio legis, in other words an interval between the signing of the election rules by the president and their coming into effect. This requires a completely new set of election rules. The Constitutional Tribunal has also suggested such a vacatio legis concerning vital legislation.

Taking the above considerations into account, the earliest possible date for the Sejm elections is the beginning of July, but practically speaking the elections will—probably—take place after the vacations....

SDRP 7 Feb Statement Criticizes Government

AU1402124591 Warsaw TRYBUNA in Polish 8 Feb 91 p 3

[Social Democratic Party, SDRP, Central Executive Committee February 7 Statement: "A Drastic Deterioration of Working People's Standard of Living"]

[Text] We want to express our anxiety about the dramatic fall in the living standards of working people.

Production has fallen by 25 percent. Inflation reached 350 percent. Economic restructuring has not succeeded. Agriculture faces catastrophe. Prices for agricultural products have increased fourfold, whereas prices for articles needed by farmers have increased eightfold. The government's restrictive financial and fiscal policy—including the tax on the so-called excess earnings—toward state enterprises, does not give them an equal chance of participating in a free market economy.

Real pay has fallen by 33 percent. Given the continuing salary differentiation it means that large groups of people are being pushed below subsistence level.

About 1,100,000 people are now out of work. Year-end unemployment is three times greater than originally forecast by the government.

In housing construction, we have slipped back to 1950 output figures. At the same time, the high price of housing ensures that thousands of people cannot even begin to dream of owning their own home.

The overwhelming majority of Poles could not afford to take a holiday last year, or to send their children away to summer camp. Last year, about 80 percent of Poles did not buy a single book.

In the light of such facts, there is nothing convincing about the claims made by the "Solidarity" camp (the faction that was linked to the former government and now finds itself in opposition), that the policies it is championing today, are any more correct than their former ones.

The forces that are presently in government stem from the same political movement. These forces came to power by attacking and negating the policies of their predecessors in government. It now seems that these same policies are to be continued, which means that the new authorities are not going to keep their electoral promise to accelerate the systemic changes in our economy and improve the working people's living conditions.

The SDRP will categorically oppose—using methods appropriate to a parliamentary democracy—the policies of the ruling camp that do not respect electoral obligations, that lead to a further deterioration of working people's living conditions, to conflicts, and the disruption of public life.

Warsaw, February 7, 1991.

Peasants Solidarity Congress Elects Officials

LD1702231291 Warsaw PAP in English 2038 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Rzeszow, Feb 17—The Polish Peasant's Union Solidarity (PSL Solidarnosc) wound up today its first congress.

The meeting, held in the south-eastern town of Boguchwala near Rzeszow, was attended by 300 delegates from 41 provinces, representing some 12,000 members of the Party. Among the guests of the Congress were Roman Bartoszcze, who is leader of the Polish Peasant's Union PSL, and Senate Speaker Andrzej Stelmachowski.

The Congress elected Jozef Slisz president of the Union, and appointed a 70-person National Council. It also adopted a programme of the party's activity and a statute.

Speaking on behalf of Polish President Lech Walesa, Undersecretary of State in the Presidential Office Teresa Liszcz said the establishment and strengthening of PSL Solidarity constituted an important factor of the current political life in Poland, particularly in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections. She added Lech Walesa spoke highly about the Party as its programme heeded the interests of the country.

Presenting the Party's programme, Slisz, who is deputy senate speaker, stressed the need to preserve the ideological values of both Solidarity and the peasants' movement. He spoke in favor of cooperation with all parties representing farmers.

Leaders of the Solidarity of Private Farmers Gabriel Janowski suggested unity in the parliamentary elections. Declarations of political cooperation were forwarded

also by Aleksander Hall of the forum of the Democratic Right and by Zbigniew Rokicki of the Liberal-Democratic Congress.

The meeting issued an appeal to all political groupings having their roots in Solidarity to give up arguments and unite during the upcoming elections. They also voiced support for efforts by the Polish Government concerning the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Poland till the end of 1991, and for independence efforts by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Government Agricultural Policy Outline Reported

AU1902164691 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 15 Feb 91 Economy and Law Section p 1

[Zbigniew Wyczesany report: "A Specific Program for Agriculture"]

[Text] Andrzej Zarebski, government press spokesman, inaugurated the first meeting with journalists in the Polish State Information Agency. He warned, however, that the name has not yet been officially approved and although the venue will remain the same, it will no longer be called INTERPRESS. The news conference, the first to be held at Pilsudski Square, was also attended by Adam Tanski, minister for agriculture and food economy.

Minister Tanski presented "seven factors" (more accurately, social and economic phenomena), which form the assumptions underlying the government's policy towards the agricultural sector in 1991:

—Demand for food will grow, by 1-2 percent annually;

—Expenditure on food in household budgets will be far greater than in Europe and is estimated at almost 60 percent. In other countries it is much lower;

—Poland's rural population is almost 38 percent of the total population and the number of people employed for every 100 hectares (21 people), is three to four times greater than in EEC countries;

—Poland's agricultural sector, with private farmer dominance, is not developing energetically, has few dynamic qualities, and is best described as "waiting for better times";

—Poland's agricultural and food exports industry is becoming less competitive and is meeting difficulties, especially in the West;

—The sector has to buy industrial products at very high prices, but it can only sell its products at low prices. A large share of agricultural profits is being absorbed by various intermediaries;

—In 1990, agricultural products encountered strong market barriers and this produced anxiety in the agricultural community, strikes, and numerous protests. This was interpreted that the state had no agricultural policy.

Minister Tanski outlined the government's policy for 1991:

Subsidies: Central budget agricultural subsidies are increased (including the subsidy for social and welfare items) from 8.5 percent in 1990 to 8.8 percent in 1991. To achieve maximum effectiveness subsidies will go directly to agriculture and the farmers and not to intermediaries or into production for the agricultural sector. A pool of 3.1 trillion zlotys [Z], has been set aside for the modernization of agriculture and rural villages. This will include capital investments and infrastructure. A sum of Z1.1 trillion is allocated for financing research into horticulture.

Loan Credit: The Ministry of Finance will allocate Z1.2 trillion to support the lower interest rates for some agricultural loans. The interest rate will be fixed after negotiations with banks and after the Sejm approves this year's budget. Preferential and low interest credit lines will be opened for the purchase of fertilizers and pesticides.

Taxes: The tax principles and the exemptions and reliefs currently in force, will be retained. There is a possibility that state agricultural farms may receive separate principles for quotas and methods of calculating wage differentials.

Protection of internal production: It is a possible that steps will be taken to protect Polish producers from unfair foreign competition (anti-dumping procedures), and new duties and tariffs will reflect the needs of the agricultural producers. Those sectors of agriculture that have a good chance of competing internationally will receive greater support.

The Agricultural Market Agency: This is to be an effective instrument of state intervention. Its financial allocation is increased from Z887 billion in 1990 to Z2,280 billion in 1991.

Structural and ownership changes in agriculture are to be continued. This should stimulate sector activity, for example, the sugar processing industry, corn milling, meat processing, and vegetable and fruit market gardening.

Widespread farm modernization, especially by linking financial credits to concrete, individual projects for improving farms. Agrarian changes and the creation of new employments in rural areas will be encouraged. Regions with the highest unemployment will be targeted initially.

During the news conference Minister Tanski took questions from the floor. What surprised the journalists was that the new minister of agriculture, with one exception, did not have to rely on the ministry's experts. The one question he referred to his advisers was on the volume of

the barley stockpile in state silos. Although the stockpile is quite substantial, it transpired that the Agricultural Market Agency does not intend to cease intervention purchases of barley in 1991.

Next Enterprises for Privatization Announced

AU1502095591 Warsaw TRYBUNA in Polish 11 Feb 91 p 3

[Andrzej Lesz Czynski report: "After 'The Five' Come 'The Seven'"]

[Text] After a few initial difficulties all the shares of the five enterprises recently privatized found buyers. Now we hear that privatization is to be accelerated by other means, especially by liquidation.

The word "liquidation" has bad connotations in Polish. However, it does not have to mean total abolition, merely a kind of dissolution so that the enterprise can be reorganized in another way. At the same time this implies a change of ownership. This is the kind of liquidation envisaged by the government.

Nevertheless, it has been decided not to completely abandon the former way to privatization by capitalization, namely, the creation of stock companies and the sale of stock to the public. After the privatization of the first five enterprises, it is intended to privatize the next seven in April or May 1991.

The upcoming privatization list contains seven of the best known and recognizable enterprises, whose products are possibly better known than those of the first five that have been privatized. In any case, their products are much more frequently encountered in our everyday life.

—The "Bytom" Clothes Group. For many years this has been known as the flagship of Polish export. The "Vistula" label is renowned for its men's jackets; "Intermoda" for its trousers; and "Bytom" for its suits. Clients from Poland, Germany, France, Denmark, Austria, and the United States are very pleased with their business with this manufacturer. About 70 percent of the factory's production is exported worldwide. Last year, the concern generated a profit of 47 billion zlotys [Z].

—"Wolczanka" Lodz. No need to introduce this enterprise. It is famous for its men's shirts and women's blouses. Last year's production amounted to Z192 billion. Almost Z121 billion of this production was exported to large department stores in Germany, the United States, Denmark, and Holland. Last year, about Z10 billion was spent on modernizing the factory.

— The Swarzedz Furniture Works. This enterprise was to have been included in the first round of privatizations, but it did not want to rush things at the risk of sacrificing quality, says Director Andrzej Pawlak. Privatization of the works has been prepared by consulting firms such as IFC, KPAMC, and the Sopot-based "Doradca." Swarzedz manufactured furniture is very well known in Scandinavia and Germany. In Poland it is much harder to come across.

—The Odra Edible Fats Processing Works in Brzeg. The product range of this manufacturer is very well known in Poland, for example, margarine brand names like "Kora," "Ola," and "Kama," as well as other edible oils. The total value of sales last year amounted to Z308 billion and about 15 percent of production is exported.

—The Krapkowice Shoe Factory. The enterprise is one of the top shoe manufacturers in Poland. Its goods are renowned for their high quality and styles. A large part of the factory's production is exported.

—"Okocim" Brewery. This is one of those rare examples where the name of the establishment becomes synonymous with its product. The same thing happened with Electrolux and Xerox. Okocim beers will be the first Polish beers to be available in cans (with cooperation from the Legnica enterprise "Legpol").

—The Inowroclaw Glass Works "Irena." The glass works has a 54-year old tradition. Before the works was privately owned. From large volume bottle production, the enterprise has diversified into all kinds of household and fancy glassware. It has been a producer of crystal glass for the last 15 years. Almost 50 percent of the production is exported. The total value of last year's production reached Z122 billion.

These candidates for privatization are thus all top performers, but it remains to be seen how their shares sell. Opinion poll figures are not optimistic. They indicate that public interest in privatization is declining. In November 1990, the public opinion polls showed that 29.5 percent of those questioned expressed great interest in purchasing shares. By January this number had dropped to only 7.9 percent. Another bad sign is that the resale price of the government's second series of share bonds is continuously falling.

Is people's lack of money the reason or in these days of high inflation are people opting for the uncomplicated nature of bank interest accounts and not bothering to invest in company shares? Of course, the so-called institutional investors might come to the privatization rescue, but if this happens, it will explode the myth of the democratization of capital. Government privatization bonds could help the process along and we hear that these will become available sometime in the latter half of 1991. Perhaps this is what some people are waiting for? The new minister for ownership changes said in the Sejm that the Polish market is difficult, unpredictable, and uncertain.

Daily on Visa-Free Travel for Citizens

AU1902103791 Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 12 Feb 91 p 2

['wicz' report: "No Visas To Denmark Possibly by March"]

[Text] "Denmark will probably be the first country to lift visa requirements for Poles," Wieslaw Paluszynski, head of the Interior Ministry's Press Department, told ZYCIE. Talks on this subject are at a very advanced stage, and an official Danish statement on lifting visas, possibly as of March, is expected before the end of the month.

However, it has still not been decided whether or not entry to Denmark will be conditional on the possession of a specified sum of money. For the Danes, visa-free entry for Poles would mean having to "tighten" their border with Sweden and Norway, with whom they have concluded visa-free travel agreements. The Norwegians, and especially the Swedes, are not eager to open their borders to Poles.

Also at an advanced stage are talks on the lifting of visa requirements by the Schengen group of countries, which includes Germany, France, and Benelux. On the other hand, there is little chance of unrestricted travel to Austria soon, and no chance at all concerning Switzerland.

The West is reluctant to abolish visas mainly through fear of a wave of immigrants from the USSR. The Soviet authorities have been talking of 1.5 million people keen to leave the country. Therefore, before Poland can abolish visas, there must be a guarantee that illegal immigrants trying to get to the West via Poland will be received back by the USSR if the Polish authorities catch them.

Our trump card in the talks is the statutory regulation that permits the revocation of the passport of a Pole who has committed an offense abroad.

PAP Chairman Discusses Changes in Agency

AU1902150891 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 15 Feb 91 pp 1, 2

[Interview with PAP Chairman Ignacy Rutkiewicz by Jacek Lutomski; place and date not given: "PAP—The Written Word Against the Moving Image"]

[Excerpts] [Lutomski] How did you adapt from being editor of the monthly ODRA to the daily or even hourly pace of the Polish Press Agency [PAP]?

[Rutkiewicz] It has been five months since my appointment, and I cannot deny that the beginning was very difficult, even from the point of view of having to scan all the dailies, something I had not done for a very long time. How I was going to work with such a large, varied, and completely unknown staff was even more problematic. For many years, PAP did not have a good reputation and was recognized as the party's propaganda outlet. Now with hindsight, I am pleased to say that things have worked out well. Once all the ideologically unacceptable or incompetent people left, it became clear that we had a professional, effective, and dedicated team. [passage omitted]

[Lutomski] But people seem to be even more critical of PAP, the most important of all Polish press agencies. I only have to mention comments made by my colleagues at RZECZPOSPOLITA who accuse PAP of awful, dull journalism and claim that there are constant corrections and technical faults in the head office and regional bureaus.

[Rutkiewicz] The technical faults are the responsibility of the Ministry of Communications, but it is true that we have severe problems with our technical infrastructure. Regarding the language, I think we have improved, but generally, I have to admit that even from my own observations of our reporting and editorial work, the comment is justified. I hope that the seminar approach we are soon to introduce will help. We have recently hired Michal Kwiatkowski from AFP in an advisory capacity. He has been with AFP for many years and will concentrate on journalistic and editorial training. We are also introducing a translated version of AFP's manual, which is an excellent guide to writing, editing, and how to react to news developments. To sum up, we have made great strides as regards staff matters and structural changes within the agency, but much less on the journalistic side.

[Lutomski] It appears that PAP is "aging."

[Rutkiewicz] Old employees are retiring and we are replacing 15 of our 20 foreign correspondents. Younger people will be appointed to these posts and to our new bureaus in Vilnius and Kiev. We are recruiting new people and soon advertisements will appear in the press. [passage omitted]

[Lutomski] PAP finds itself in a difficult financial situation and has to raise its revenues by a factor of four. The Sejm Commission for Culture and the Mass Media has given you an additional grant of 25 billion zlotys for modernization.

[Rutkiewicz] Yes, but regrettably the Commission for Economic Policy and Budget and Finance has cut this grant by 50 percent. [passage omitted]

[Lutomski] You are now threatened by competition from the INTERPRESS agency, which is turning into a state information and promotional agency.

[Rutkiewicz] We welcome the new challenge.

[Lutomski] It seems that some of PAP's financial and organizational problems stem from its uncertain and complex status. It is a state agency, a budgetary enterprise, as well as a central office.

[Rutkiewicz] I agree with Prime Minister Bielecki that our status must be altered. PAP should cease to be a state agency and become an independent institution that cooperates with the government and transmits its information. Several alternatives are being

discussed, but no concrete decisions have yet been made. We may transform ourselves into a state-owned company and later into a joint stock company or a foundation or some other public institution answerable to the public, like Polish Television.

We are already anticipating this independence. We are a typical press agency, we do not transmit our own views or commentaries, like other respected press agencies do. Despite this fact there is continuing suspicion that a government agency has a "hot line" through which it receives specific instructions on how to act. I have never received such a phone call, not in my former job or this one. The suspicions remain, however. We should change our status because at present we are prohibited from joining with share companies. Possibilities do exist, the money is there—in Poland and abroad—and we should reach for it. [passage omitted]

Nastase on Guest Status at Council of Europe

AU2002124391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1146 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 20/2/1991—It is the first time when a Romanian representative takes part in such a meeting of the main intergovernmental body of the Council of Europe, following the special guest status granted to Romania through the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on February 1, 1991, stated the Romanian minister of foreign affairs, Adrian Nastase, before leaving for Madrid. We experience, of course, he showed, a feeling of satisfaction over this moment marking an important step in joining the European nations and creating the possibility to work together with the other states members of the Council to achieve the philosophical binder so necessary to the European unity, to the defence of democratic principles and human rights.

The Romanian dignitary announced that he would meet with the foreign ministers of Spain and Hungary, that diplomatic contacts were under way to schedule other meetings, too, and that a call on King Juan Carlos I of Spain was also in the programme as well as meetings with members of the Romanian emigration in Spain.

Therefore, the minister said in conclusion, a complex programme is set for Madrid where we intend to present the democratic processes in our country, the difficulties confronting them, to emphasise the irreversibility of the Romanian people's option for democracy, political pluralism and respect for the human rights and freedoms.

Senator Protests Neglect of National Minorities

AU1802103591 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 11 Feb 91 pp 1,2

[MTI report: "Karoly Kiraly's Letter to Petre Roman"]

[Text] In an open letter to Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman, Romanian Senator Karoly Kiraly questions Roman on the previously promised guaranteeing and implementation of individual and collective rights for national minorities.

The Saturday/Sunday edition of the Romanian daily MAGYAR SZO [HUNGARIAN WORD] carries Kiraly's letter, in which the senator stresses that none of the plans have been implemented from the statement made by the National Salvation Front [FSN] on national minority rights on 7 January 1990, or from the statement made by Petre Roman's government—an interim government at the time—on 23 February 1990; indeed, these statements have since been ignored. This is proven by the time that has elapsed since then.

"In my opinion, you are proving to be politically spineless, and I suspect that—on a mutual basis—you have let yourself be influenced by apolitical elements that have no place in a modern, European school of thought," Kiraly stresses in his letter, referring to the "intimate relations" between Petre Roman and the Vatra Romaneasca.

The letter individually examines all the promises made in the FSN statement about the constitutional guaranteeing of individual and collective rights for national minorities. Kiraly reminds Roman that the prime minister personally signed a government statement on the securing of Hungarian-language schools at all levels; the government statement also mentioned that the Ministry of Telecommunications would guarantee the appropriate technical conditions so viewers in the counties of Harghita and Kovasna could watch the second channel of Romanian television, as well as Hungarian television.

These promises have not been kept, and Hungarian and German programs have been curtailed on television. Kiraly tells Roman that "both at home and abroad," these facts "not only question your trustworthiness and your assumed moral and political stance, they also question the attitude of your governmental majority."

Roman Rejects Open-Letter Accusations

AU1802105791 Bucharest Domestic Service in Romanian 1100 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] According to ROMPRES, on 6 February, Senator Kiraly Karoly [senator of UDMR, the Democratic Association of Hungarians in Romania] sent an open letter to Prime Minister Petre Roman. The letter refers to a number of issues concerning the observation of the rights of national minorities and asks the prime minister to state publicly his viewpoints on the senator's assessments.

The ROMPRES agency publishes the following letter of reply by the prime minister:

Mr. Senator Kiraly Karoly:

I noted with astonishment the open letter you addressed to me on 6 February this year, an astonishment due to the totally unfounded claims you make in that letter and the totally unsuitable tone with which you deem fit to address yourself to the prime minister of a country, which, I find myself obliged to remind you, is also your country.

In your letter, you deny [word indistinct] any progress on the issue of the rights of the national minorities in Romania and you question the sincerity of the statements made by the National Salvation Front [FSN] and the government in this respect.

I strongly declare—the letter further states—and this can also be attested to by the Romanian citizens of Hungarian nationality, that all FSN and government commitments on issues pertaining to the national minorities and other sectors of the economic, social, and political life are being implemented in good faith. Nothing has changed in the Front's or government's positions. On the

contrary, on the issue of national minorities, we probably proved more than in other fields that we fulfill our pledges. The things that remain to be done to ensure the full assertion of the legitimate aspirations of each citizen in this country, regardless of nationality, can only be achieved in step with our progress along the road of democracy and prosperity for the entire Romanian society.

What you are currently doing—reads the letter addressed by Prime Minister Petre Roman to Senator Kiraly Karoly—is making a new attempt to force one's hand, on the basis of the principle "everything now," including the satisfaction of certain extremist and unacceptable demands, without taking into consideration the social ensemble and the overall political evolution in the country. Or, maybe you just want to use the youthfulness of our new democracy and its still fragile democratic and self-defense structures.

By now, in the period that has elapsed since the revolution—the letter reads—you should have realized how counterproductive and damaging such practices are for the very promotion of the requirements of the minority in whose name you claim to speak and whose true interests you should defend. You unhesitatingly state, by virtue of the same attempt to force the natural course of events, that you speak on behalf of more than 6 million fellow nationals, citizens of Romania. You should leave it to honest statistics and democracy, which you never practised in the old regime, to have their say and find out how many fellow nationals you have. Likewise, you should leave it to the country and even to your fellow nationals to prove, also democratically, who really was and is politically spineless, the letter further reads.

True moral authority cannot be gained through either negativist attitudes or contempt for the legitimate representatives of the Romanian state. In spite of your genuine effort to provoke me to the use of invectives and despite, your attempt to air once again the idea of the so-called cultural inequality and the so-called undemocratic predisposition, I tell you that, at the head of this government, I will continue to be the resolute advocate of fully equal rights among all Romania's citizens and of a dignified European status for the national minorities.

The letter is signed: Petre Roman

RMDSZ Official Protests UVR 'Vituperations'

AU2002105991 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 14 Feb 91 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Odon Bitay, spokesman of the Democratic Association of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ), by "Sz.Cs" on the telephone from Bucharest; date not given: "Vatra Romaneasca Lashed Out at Us—The RMDSZ Protests"; first two paragraphs are NEPSZAVA introduction]

[Text] The Steering Committee of the Vatra Romaneasca [UVR] sent an extremist anti-Hungarian appeal to the Romanian press agency ROMPRES. The UVR not only accuses the Hungarians in Romania of separatism, but also makes use of the affair of Hungarian arms sales to Yugoslavia to incite suspicion toward Hungary.

Odon Bitay, spokesman of the Democratic Association of Hungarians in Romania [RMDSZ] called the Vatra statement outrageous, disgusting, and inexplicable.

[NEPSZAVA] The timing of this Vatra statement was probably not accidental. Are we right?

[Bitay] Unfortunately, this supposition is only partially justified because the Hungarian weapons scandal was really a good pretext for the Vatra people to publish the vituperations they regard as a statement, but the antecedents can be traced back in time. The Kalashnikov issue was not even mentioned when the storm clouds began to gather above the RMDSZ. A campaign is developing against us that is perhaps even more dangerous than the one directed against us in the old regime because, today, some elements—unfortunately also elements in very high echelons—are trying to drive the Hungarians back under the banner of democracy. They question the legitimacy of the RMDSZ as a party and are trying to modify the Constitution to force us out of Parliament.

[NEPSZAVA] Has the RMDSZ found some explanation for the current concentrated attacks?

[Bitay] I cannot speak of concrete things, but the explanation could be that this new situation has been slowly emerging since the changes that took place in December 1989.

[NEPSZAVA] You did not mention the word "revolution." Was this on purpose?

[Bitay] We must treat every formulation very cautiously and that is why I used the word: changes. We also have to be very cautious about every manifestation of the RMDSZ because organizations like the UVR make use of everything that is favorable for them.

[NEPSZAVA] It seemed as if the Vatra has become more silent lately.

[Bitay] This silence was superficial and illusory; however, we will continue to act soberly and reasonably in this upcoming storm too. Naturally, we will take the necessary measures in Parliament and in the government against the incitement of the UVR, but in the current situation every counterstep is totally unpredictable.

PNT-cd Message to Moldova's President Snegur

AU2002101991 Bucharest DREPTATEA in Romanian 14 Feb 91 p 1

[Message by National Peasant-Christian Democratic Party parliamentary group to Moldovan President Mr. Mircea Snegur; place and date not given]

[Text] On behalf of the National Peasant Christian Democratic Party [PNT-cd], we greet your presence in Romania's Parliament with fraternal love.

Through you, we also want to convey greetings to all brethren on the other side of the Prut, the millions of Romanians from whom we have been separated for almost half a century of bitterness.

Despite the political border erected between us through the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, you have always been present in our hearts and thoughts. This could not be different, because, despite these vicissitudes of destiny, we are linked by a common multimillennium-old history and we are linked through the same language, traditions, and aspirations.

Times have changed now. We are witnessing an intense process of building a new world based on freedom and justice and of a new order that will offer the possibility for all peoples to decide on their destiny in accordance with their own desires.

We are witnessing a process of building a new and united Europe in which the political borders between countries tend to disappear, a fact that will lead—as Nicolae Titulescu used to say—to the spiritualization of borders.

Until then, the current political border between our countries will have to become more and more permeable. If it was possible for the border between Germany and France, which was characterized by fierce century-old disputes, to be almost nonexistent today, then the border on the Prut River that separates the sons of the same people, must all the more go through such a process. With this hope in our hearts, we once again want to convey cordial greetings to all our brethren on the other side of the Prut.

Ion Diaconescu on behalf of the PNT-cd Parliamentary Group

Railworkers' Strike Continues; Dialogue Resumed

AU1902144591 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1036 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—This morning at ten o'clock it was resumed the dialogue between the governmental commission headed by the minister of state in charge with the quality of life and social security, Ion Aurel Stoica, who went yesterday morning to Iasi, and the representatives of the Alliances of the Railway Workers' Trade Unions in the Iasi and Timisoara Railway Departments on a strike since February 8 and 12, respectively.

The dialogue, meant to find out the possibilities to appease the labour conflict and to resume the freight and passenger railway transport, started only in the evening of Monday after solving several questions considered as technical and continued until late in the night.

It was upset at about 0930 in the evening, when it was announced that a passenger train was in the Iasi railway station from the disposition of that station's leader. The Iasi trade union leaders intervened and the train was stopped.

Emphasising the necessity of that dialogue, Mr. Ion Aurel Stoica insisted on the trade unions' attributions in a state of law and on the obligations incumbent on them in keeping with the laws in force, citing to this end Law No. 15/1991 (concerning the commercial societies) and the recent resolution of the Supreme Court of Justice on interrupting the strike for sixty days, a period considered as necessary and enough for the settlements of all litigious problems. In his opinion, they can be solved by reorganising the entire activity in transports. To this end, consideration is taken of the setting up in ten days of the Romanian Railways National Society as autonomous enterprise and the elaboration in a fortnight at most of the railway workers' statute whose project is to be debated by all those interested.

In their turn, the strikers' representatives underscored that this conflict is based not on the trade union leaders but on the decision of trade union members, mentioning that that action had been postponed three times. They asked for guarantees for the observance of the rights obtained by railway workers, as well as of the terms for their application.

The dialogue was attended by representatives of the Alliances of the Trade Unions in the Iasi and Timisoara Railway Departments. At their request, in the capacity as spokesman of the Iasi railway workers, the attendance also included Mr. Stefan Siromancenco, leader of the Free Trade Union of the Constanta Railway Department and member in the National Commission of the Railway Workers' Trade Unions.

Trade Unions Called To Join Strike

AU1902182891 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1707 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—The Steering Committee of the Railway Free Trade Unions Alliance in Iasi released a communique expressing its viewpoint on the situation created by the railway strike.

Essentially, the communique expresses discontent at the way in which the government solved the claims set forth last year and, consequently, calls on railway trade unions throughout the country to urgently joint in the strikes in Iasi and Timisoara.

Protest is voiced against Law 15/1191 which, as the Steering Committee of the Trade Unions Alliance considers, should be suspended and discussed again by the legislative forum together with the trade unions.

Government Calls For End to Strike

AU1902162491 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1441 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—During the first part of the talks under way in Iasi between a government commission and leaders of the Railway Trade Union Alliances of Iasi and Timisoara, Mr. Ioan Aurel Stoica, minister of state in charge of the quality of life and social security, made the following statement to the press: "On Monday and throughout yesterday we had several talks with part of the leaders of the two alliances and we discussed the exigencies the presence of the government team in Iasi entails as well as the actions the government should take to solve that work dispute.

"From the very beginning, we agreed on the technical conditions to underlie our dialogue—with a ban on the live broadcast of our talks in the first place. It was with amazement that I found out round midnight that passages of our talks had been broadcast, which means a lack of fair play and of mutual respect.

"The national economy is nearly collapsing and under such circumstances we are asked to make an attempt on the rules of the state of law. We are not here to lure the trade unions into observing the decision made by the Supreme Court of Justice. As a representative of the government I should like to point out that the government trade union commission found reasons for railway workers to resume their work in Iasi following the way in which the three claims formulated on January 31, 1991 were solved. Two of these claims were solved and as for the 13th salary the government looked for and found other resources as the relevant ministry had no money to pay it.

"With respect to the claims concerning the granting of rights in money over 1986-1989 I am authorized to state that until March 10 we will jointly discuss, in the government trade union commission, the elaboration of a normative act for the issuance of bonds. I should like to urge all railway workers in the country, especially those in Iasi and Timisoara, to show lucidity, as the path they are following now is not the one that leads to the expected results.

"In this respect, I should like trade union leaders to make a written statement concerning the end of their strike and the resumption of work, in line with the decision made by the Supreme Court of Justice."

FSN's Radina Interviewed on Party's Future

AU1802095291 Bucharest LUMEA AZI in Romanian No. 6 7 Feb 91 pp 6-7

[Interview with Velicu Radina, secretary of press and propaganda of the National Salvation Front, by Stelian Turlea: "Romanian Issues"; first two paragraphs are LUMEA AZI introduction]

[Excerpts] The National Salvation Front [FSN] has been take over by the government; nonexistence of a Steering Collegium; trends and possible splits. The Front is not the "boss." The president is a Front member.

The FSN conference was held in Bucharest on 27 January. A few days before, our magazine published an article about the "status of the Front" a year after being established and about its alleged inability to organize the national convention that was announced long ago. Mr. Velicu Radina, secretary of press and propaganda within the FSN, approached us in the desire to clarify certain things. Seen from within the Front, things seem to be completely different....

[Turlea] Mr. Radina, for about three-quarters of a year there has been talk about a coming FSN national convention. First announced for September, then for November, it was postponed to January 1991. January has passed, and the only thing that was organized was a conference in Bucharest. This, you have to admit, generates confusion or even bewilderment and leads to speculation. It is not known when the national convention will be organized—in any case, nothing has been made public unless it will hastily be organized over night. What are the obstacles? How do you see the situation from the angle of the Front?

[Radina] Let me begin with the organizational aspect—because a convention implies such aspects. We had planned such a conference in the summer of last year or rather in October-November. Our aim is to strengthen regional structures throughout the country to prepare for this national convention beginning with the grassroots and up to the top. [passage omitted] Regional conferences started in the fall, especially in a few big cities, in municipalities, and counties. [passage omitted] Bucharest has not concluded this process; therefore, we cannot hold the national convention. Last Sunday, however, it was agreed that it would be held in February. [passage omitted]

We started with the idea that after the elections—when the major political aspect of our country's power structure had completely changed and when certain people moved to government or other structures posing specific problems—the organization of a convention was necessary, which should no longer have the characteristics of the first conference, because in the meantime the Front had turned into a ruling party.

At the beginning of September, another body was tempestuously, so to speak, established—over the 23-24 July decision of the Steering Collegium (which was the last meeting of the Collegium!)— namely, a commission for the preparation of the national convention (a rather varied commission incorporating presidential counselors and government dignitaries) and a commission that was to deal with the programmatic documents and the

Front's political contacts with other parties. Very rapidly, however, it was explained that the second commission, which was to be coordinated by First Vice President N.S. Dumitru, actually does not exist and should not be set up. Thus, the first commission actually replaced everything with what was termed as a nonstatutory leadership team. I am still asking myself: Who can appoint a first vice president in a party that has no president? I do not know of any case in the history of European parties in which the national leader (who is the prime minister) can hold the position of executive president of a party. Thus, the Steering Collegium was removed from its position at that point being viewed as "irrelevant," "inoperative," and as "a factor for slowing things" and so forth. Suddenly the Front dwindled very much at the central level. Then its links with the country weakened and were only randomly maintained. As a party, the Front became visibly inefficient, its links with the executive power changed their nature, and the government, which has more pressing problems, is leaving its mark on the party—a situation that has a negative effect at all levels.

[Turlea] What you say makes me interrupt you to shed light on an issue that has actually been discussed intensively: What is the Front—a movement or Party? Is the convention to clarify this issue?

[Radina] Certainly. Briefly put, the Front was a spontaneous movement with no party behind it. Later, after 6 February 1990, the activity started to turn the Front into a political formation so as to enable it to participate in the elections. I cannot say that we succeeded in doing so between February and April; that was impossible; however, we started to lay its foundation. It was not the right time, nor the right sociopolitical situation in Romania to develop very clear ideological options. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] You are touching exactly on the core of my question. Obviously a party has to have a certain ideology. A movement, especially a "broad" one, implies numerous directions, that is several trends, hence probably questions like: Are there several trends within the Front? Who represents them? The second point of the question is: Whom does the Front represent, either as a broad movement or as a party with a clear ideology?

[Radina] I cannot say that the Front consisted of several groups right before the elections. Certainly, there was a great variety of views and concepts, which still exist to this day. The problem of such trends is being discussed only now at the Bucharest municipal conference. [passage omitted]

The front's program platform explains that it holds a center-left position. [passage omitted] Therefore, it could have center or more leftist options—something that is happening in fact; however, after the conference in Bucharest, we noted that our political spectrum was too broad to be genuine: from center-left to center-right! [passage omitted] This, however, does not question the unity of the party during decisive times—that is, elections. Thus, the Front may incorporate both people promoting a middle line and people promoting a leftist one. Unfortunately things are different in practice. A certain leftist group was pushed to the periphery. Roman was right when he said that a "monolithic discipline" unity, a "unity in confusion," and imposed unity cannot represent a positive background for a serious political party. This would mean camouflaging certain things. Unfortunately, so far the Front probably camouflaged quite varied ideas about Romanian society. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] All this makes me return to the question: Did two to three trends, indeed, emerge with their leaders and so forth? Is there a majority trend to guide the Front in one or another direction? Is there no danger of a split?

[Radina] I can answer this by starting from the situation as it exists. Unfortunately, the Front is confronted with this lack of political information; people seek answers in the press and the media. There is general concern about the way in which the Front should view certain things. There are also critical views about certain measures regarding the government reform. [passage omitted]

The party has to define not only its structures, but also its views if it wants to remain a party and overcome this state of confusion.

There is also certain confusion that makes the Front inefficient and out of step. One reason for this are its more than faulty relations with the bodies of the parliamentary and executive power, especially the last ones. We had to contact the government several times in connection with a number of problems. This was misunderstood, especially by some people. We realized that we were disturbing and irritating the people we contacted, although we did not ask anything for the party but the settlement of problems. [passage omitted]

The conclusion is that there is a gap between words and deeds. This is why the Front was in arrears with its structures and the organization county conferences. This is why relations with the Parliament were affected, although they are better than those with the government.

Thus, the Front (I am referring to the structure that still exists) is in danger at this point of being replaced by either a parliamentary faction or by the government. In such a case there is also the danger of a split. This is very clear to me.

[Turlea] What is the solution in this case? Because there is another problem (realistic or unrealistic)—namely, certain differences between the government and the parliamentary group of the Front. Are there immediate political interests at stake, or is it a question of leaders or a conflict of generations?

[Radina] Unfortunately, the FSN has not yet voiced its opinion as a party in this respect, although it should have done so. The controversy of January this year surprised

me not because relations between the executive and Parliament always have to be wonderful. [passage omitted] The reaction within the Front was confusion; people no longer understand anything. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] In connection with this reform—no matter how unpleasant it is for you—you have to admit that there is an increasing dissatisfaction with the Front. [passage omitted] For many people the reform so far resembles too much a disguised increase in prices; many people have the feeling that they voted for something that is not taking place. Does the Front not fear losing the elections?

[Radina] This possibility does exist. Certainly, things have to be seen realistically. Any ruling party will suffer wear and tear. Even if they are excellent, strategic-tactical options of a political nature have to be backed by a good economic situation otherwise there will be shortages and problems, especially in Romania. [passage omitted] The time of revolutionary barricades has passed. What do we replace them with? With values that we have just abolished? With this point of view it is clear that the Front would no longer win the majority in the next elections. To think any different is a utopia. We will lose part of the electorate. The problem is how big will this part be. The opposition is still weak, but is able to regroup at any time; it may find a guiding idea or a leader—and things may change. Moreover, at this point I do not see how everyday problems such as heat, supplies, and prices can be solved in the shortest time possible. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] Have the relations between the FSN and Socialist Labor Party [PSM] been defined? Have people with a very leftist leaning left to join that party? Is there a strategy to draw a line between the Front and PSM?

[Radina] Neither at the national nor local level do I know of cases of prominent people who have done so. There might be such cases, but I have no knowledge of them. You see, the emergence of the PSM has also raised problems for us. I am not of the opinion held by some of my colleagues—namely that the law should not have permitted the emergence of this party. One cannot talk of a state of law only when it suits you. The PSM emerged at a time when social tension was intense and when dissatisfaction was great because of price liberalization.

This was foreseeable. On the basis of the government reform, the Front found itself drawn toward a centrist position, thus leaving the left wing of the political spectrum completely uncovered. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] I would like to ask a question in connection with the leaders. Many people still link the Front to Mr. Iliescu who, as the country's president, has withdrawn from the party, thus becoming the president of all; however, he sent a message to the FSN conference in Bucharest. What is going on?

[Radina] That message was a mistake. Things would have been different had it been a National Convention. The FSN has to stop communist-type of lies—namely, that the country's president has suddenly ceased to be a Front member—because when his mandate ends, he will return to the Front, and if he is granted a new mandate, he will leave it again. [passage omitted]

How many of the millions of Romanians—sympathizers or not of the Front—believe that Mr. Iliescu is not a FSN member? Therefore, our parliamentary group could remove from the [draft] constitution the provision that the president has to be apolitical; thus, President Iliescu may rejoin the Front, because he still is a symbol for its members not to be compared with anyone. Probably because of the void he left after the elections, the Front is now in a total mess.

[Turlea] There has been much talk of late about certain corrupt members of the Front holding important positions. This confirms the opinion that many people joined the FSN strictly for material interests. What is the Front doing about this danger?

[Radina] Things are far from well in this respect. The explanations are varied. Obviously all of us met accidentally, without knowing each other. Some left, some stayed and made it to top positions. [passage omitted]

[Turlea] It is surprising that, contrary to all the other parties represented in Parliament, in general the Front hardly takes a position on foreign policy issues leaving it up to the government to take action. Why?

[Radina] This confuses me as well; and this applies not only to foreign policy issues. The Parliament mostly awaits an initiative by the government, which, to a certain extent, has become the driving force of this general reform and this transition. It may be explained by the pressure of time, the urgent nature of some laws, but it is equally necessary for the parliamentarians to be knowledgeable in varied areas and thus they should be much more active.

As for foreign policy issues, the Front has had very few international political contacts and even those were of no significance. This is an organizational defect that we hope will be remedied after the convention; however, the Front has not even expressed its opinion on current international events. So many events are happening in the world: there are principled problems regarding Eastern and Central Europe, European integration, and various zones of conflict. Front members are wondering about the world's pulse at two speed levels, about the reemergence of certain spheres of influence under conditions of the disappearance of the East-West demarcation line, while the North-South one is being presetved and accentuated. I hope that serious discussions will take place at the National Convention, including the situation of present-day social-democracy. [passage omitted]

Another foreign issue is that of Bessarabia. In my view, the problem of Bessarabia and that of Transylvania cannot be compared. Not to discuss the Bessarabian

issue out of fear that claims can be raised on Transylvania seems to me an aberration. Romania's position on Bessarabia cannot be viewed from this angle, because that too is Romanian soil. We do not propose and we cannot destabilize the Soviet Union; to say that we receive energy from the Soviets in exchange for "noninterference" seems to me a political gaffe. To say that a Transylvanian has different feelings from a Moldavian is another gaffe. I agree that we have to talk about postwar treaties and the observance of borders; however, this has nothing to do with the intrinsic relationship between Romania and the Romanians on the other side of the Prut River!

International League of Romanians Said 'Neutral'

AU1902161991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1439 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—In a communique released to ROMPRES the International League of Romanians, answering numerous requests from the country and from abroad, specifies the following aspects concerning its statute and its relations with other parties, leagues, associations, trade unions, alliances, etc.:

"The International League of Romanians is an independent, non-governmental organization, neutral in its relations with other non-political groups and parties. We mean to eliminate above all the idea that the International League of Romanians would be connected with the World Union of Free Romanians headed by Mr. Ion Ratiu, with opposition parties or with the governmental party" the league's communique released on February 19, 1991 in Bucharest reads. We fully respect the document mentions, among other things the programmes and statutes of all organizations, but we keep neutral, sober and independent in thought and action. We are not interested in the political colour of other organizations, we are Romanians above all and militate for relations of friendship and consideration among all Romanians in the country and abroad. Our motto is welfare on Romanian land, calm and peace among people, irrespective of their political ideas and convictions. "We reject, however, and have no relations with any extremist left or right political groups."

"We wish a real democracy for all Romanians," the league's communique signed by its chairman, Professor Ilie Puia, concludes.

Human Rights Group Set Up in Interior Ministry

AU1502200691 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1815 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 15/2/1991—A communique of the Ministry of the Interior reads as follows:

Recently a Committee for Humanitarian Law and Human Rights was set up within the Ministry of the Interior. The committee is meant to widely cooperate with similar organisms and associations in Romania and abroad, to initiate and take part in relevant activities, to make propositions for the relevant norms of the law to be applied in the ministry's activity.

At the same time the Ministry of the Interior together with the Romanian Association for Humanitarian Law initiated the organisation of short training courses for police, gendarmes and other officers, who will afterwards be in charge with problems related to humanitarian law and human rights.

These measures are an important premise of the ministry's transformation into a fundamental institution of the state of law, capable of carrying out its legal prerogatives efficiently.

Senators in Dispute Over Horthy-Period Issue

AU1802193991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1907 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 18/02/1991—The Romanian Senate's meeting of Monday, 18 February, chaired by Senate President Alexandru Birladeanu, started with the half hour question time. This part of the meeting was marked by an incident triggered by Senator Romulus Vulpescu's interpellation who demanded that the authorities concerned should open legal action to obtain the recognition, at home and abroad, of Sarmas, Ip, Moisei and Trasnea as martyr settlements considering their inhabitants' sufferings during the Horthyist occupation subsequent to the Vienna award. He also asked that legal procedure should be instituted against those responsible for war crimes. "A moral sentence discrediting the genocide perpetrated there, be it posthumous, becomes imperative", said the senator. In reply, Senator Karoly Kiraly showed that history abounds in controversial events which should therefore be left to historians and was of the opinion that one should avoid bringing up such cases that can only lead to incitation and intolerance. He termed Senator Vulpescu's intervention as calumny and strongly rejected it as such. Senator Vulpescu's promptly protested against the word "calumny".

Other questions brought the citizens' daily worries to the government's attention.

Former Securitate Chief Testifies in Trial

AU1602175991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1526 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 16/2/1991—Reserve General Iulian Vlad, former chief of the State Security Department until the December 1989 revolution is examined as witness for the prosecution, proposed by the court, in the trial of the former members of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party [PCR] Executive Political Committee, who stand charges of genocide.

In the first part of his testimony, in the session of Friday, February 15, Iulian Vlad, who stands trial himself in the

Supreme Court of Justice, Military Department, for abetting genocide, and is held in custody, declared inter alia:

"In the afternoon of December 16, 1989 I ordered the organization and sending to Timisoara of an operative group, which included Major-General Emil Macri, chief of the Economic Counterintelligence Department, Lieutenant-Colonel Gabriel Atanasiu, deputy chief of the Internal Counterintelligence Department, Lieutenant-Colonel Filip Teodorescu, deputy chief of the Counterintelligence Department, as well as workers of the Central Securitate Apparatus. The mission of the group was to gather intelligence and report accurately on the real situation in Timisoara, to establish most accurately whether what was happening in Timisoara was the result of interference by persons from abroad and, if necessary, to assist the chief of the Timis Securitate in settling the first two tasks.

"The fact that I ordered the operative group to establish precisely the existence or absence of foreign involvement is explained by that the Securitate bodies were possessed of corroborated intelligence obtained from various sources, both from the interior and from outside the country, which fitted in the data possessed also by other bodies, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defense, according to which foreign powers were working for the destabilization of the situation in Romania. It was mainly about Hungary and its supporters, the USSR and the United States. As a matter of fact, I had discussed the matter before the December events with the Ministers of National Defense and Foreign Affairs.

"Other intelligence, it too, corroborated in several ways, showed a great interest evinced by diplomatic representations to Romania in certain zones of the country, especially Timisoara, as well as the fact that foreign diplomats went to those zones without any convincing reason. Besides, after the 14th Congress of the PCR, numerous foreign journalists, who had been accredited to the congress, delayed their departure without a justification. Striking was also the big number of applications for entry visa to Romania and for approval to go to certain zones in Transylvania (Timisoara, Sibiu, Cluj) by foreign press correspondents, about whom we had intelligence that they worked under that cover for foreign intelligence services.

"It was also established that after the 14th PCR Congress, the flow of fraudulent frontier crossing was reversed, the fraudulent frontier crossing to Romania being more numerous, especially at the Romanian-Hungarian and Romanian-Yugoslav frontiers. It was founded in that respect that almost all persons who entered Romania illegally were men. Obviously, some of them had passed through the entry camp in Yugoslavia, of which we had information. As a matter of fact, the investigation of some of them showed that they did not come back to Romania to visit with relatives or friends, but to disseminate writings with a content that was hostile to the socio-economic order of the time and to start destabilizing actions.

"In that same period, a rise was noted in the flow of Soviet tourists, who entered Romania either from the USSR or from Hungary or Yugoslavia. Most of them were men.

"In consideration of all those data, the conclusion was that the foreigners and foreign countries had been involved in the Timisoara events.

"Although many writings with a hostile content," the witness said, "referred also to Ceausescu's overthrow, the steps taken by the security bodies in view of averting such an action were formal and their lack of efficiency showed on December 22, 1989.

"If the Securitate and the other formations of the Ministry of the Interior had not had collaborated with the Army, the wheel of history would have not turned backward, it would have run ahead, but the disaster would have been far greater. The Security was on the Army's side all along the December 16-22, 1989 period, as well as after that."

The witness' hearing will continue in the next session, on February 19. For the same date were subpoenaed witnesses Viorel Igret, former first secretary of the Mures County PCR Committee, and Ioachim Moga, former first secretary of the Cluj County Party Committee.

Other Witnesses Heard

AU1802194291 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1857 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 18/02/1991—The Military Section of the Higher Court of Justice has resumed the hearing of the witnesses of the prosecution in the case brought against Tudor Postelnicu, Iulian Vlad, Gianu Bucurescu, Gheorghe Danescu, Marin Barbulescu, Gheorghe Vasile all of whom held senior positions in the former Ministry of the Interior and the Department of State Security as well as against former Militia and Security officers who are accused of having illegally detained and investigated Bucharest demonstrators on 21 December 1989.

The ex-deputy of the then head of the General Division of Penitentiaries told the Court on Monday [18 February] that in the night of 21 to 22 December at about 2.00 a.m. a report had been received from Jilava Prison where over one thousand persons had been taken that the number was more than the prison could accommodate. When he reported the fact to the then deputy of the minister of the interior, General Gheorghe Danescu, the latter ordered the detained to be transferred to hospitals, clubs or any other place but not to be released.

Several witnesses who in December 1989 were under General Danescu's command said that in the afternoon

of 21 December the general had gone to the Jilava Prison and only returned to the ministry during the night.

More witnesses will be heard on 19 February from among the persons who were detained on 21 December 1989 or who may contribute relevant information about the defendants.

Trade Network Personnel Start 'Warning Strike'

AU1502205391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1752 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 15/2/1991—The Council of the Leaders of the Trade Unions in the Bucharest Commerce Network and the Federation of the Commerce Free Trade Unions whose members started a warning strike, inform public opinion that the strike was not called by the leaders but by thousands of people who spoke in favour of the strike during general meetings and signed adhesions.

The people working in the trade network have not asked higher pays, hard currency salaries, days off for the Saturdays and Sundays they have worked for years on end, reads a communique which hints at the railway workers' claims. They have asked that they be able to keep their jobs which the city council is putting up for auction, that the country's laws be observed, that prices be maintained at a decent level.

Dumitru Bozianu, vice-chairman of the Bucharest Trade Unions in the Commerce Network, stated that the claim actions of the employees would continue until their requests, inspired by the fear of losing their jobs due to the way in which the privatization of shops has been conceived and carried into effect, are met. The employees also express their discontent at the criteria set by the city council as the regards the auctions for the shops, at the lease prices which favour those with big capitals who will be able to offer astronomical rents which will reflect in the goods' prices.

The passage to privatization will not solve the problem of supply which depends not on commerce but on industry and agriculture. We sell what there is for sale and what is being allotted to us, and this is what the private entrepreneurs will do too.

He expressed disagreement with the Resolutions 84 and 85 of the government concerning the shops which, in his opinion, no longer take into consideration the social safety of the commerce employees.

A number of trade unions in the commerce network of other towns expressed their support to these actions.

Senate Approves 1991 Central Administration Budget

AU1902222391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1821 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 19/2/1991—In its Tuesday, February 19, session Romania's Senate approved, with four abstentions, the 1991 Central Administration Budget Bill. The present text includes amendments proposed by the specialized commission of the Senate and proposals made by senators during itemised discussions.

After lengthy debates, the Senate chose the second variant proposed by the government, providing the progressive rise of prices of basic foodstuffs and the adoption of adequate measures of social protection, starting April 1, 1991. The budget bill provides a deficit of 37.3 billion lei, expressing the contradiction between the limited character of ordinary revenues, under the conditions of reducing the production and increasing general expenditure.

The Senate allowed the government to distribute extra funds to fields such as national defence, public order, agriculture, including the pensions of former agricultural production cooperatives members.

Progress of Privatization in Trade Viewed

AU1902144891 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0955 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—As many as 438 commercial companies (of which 96 of all-country interest and 342 of local interest) were created in Romania's home trade starting October 1, 1990, which compares with 404 previously existing enterprises. The new commercial companies hold integral state capital and are broadly autonomous in decision making on their own operation and development.

Furthermore, producer economic agents were given 5,590 alimentary and non-alimentary stores. At the same time, 300 commercial companies with contributions in foreign capital were set up.

As a continuation of the process of decentralizing economic activities 2,500 units were given for administration, 500 units were rented and 2,300 commercial companies were leased, or were given under mandate and commission. Of the 26,000 commercial companies with an integral state capital 5,300 are now administered in the new forms set under the law. As part of debates with executives of commercial companies it was agreed that in February 1991 most units should be administered according to the government decision of 1990.

All these data refer to the former state-run trade network, which does not include consumer and handicraft cooperatives and other economic agents boasting their own outlets.

Baltazar News Conference on Investments, Land Law

AU1902182791 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1721 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/2/1991—The Romanian Government's foreign investments policy was the first subject Government Spokesmen Bogdan Baltazar

touched at his weekly news briefing, following the persistent fear among financial circles abroad that foreign investments in Romania might not be safe.

The Romanian executive, he said, regards these investments as being capable to play a substantial role in the present restructuring and reform processes in Romania. It was to this effect that the Romanian Government set up as early as 25 July, 1990 the Romanian Agency for Promotion of Foreign Investment and Economic Assistance, which aligns Romania to similar policies in countries like Portugal or Egypt. Another step forward Romania has taken to the same course is the Bill on Promotion of Foreign Investments, recently approved by the Assembly of Deputies and under debates in the Senate, a bill that gives firm and legal guarantees to foreign investors against nationalisation, expropriation, confiscation and other similar measures.

The bill provides for the establishment in Romania of foreign capital ventures with shareholding going as far as hundred percent, allowing, among others, for banking and insurance activities which, in many other countries are under strict national control. Likewise, the procedure for foreign investments registration in Romania is quite simple, transparent and expeditious, forestalling arbitrariness or bureaucracy, rejection or deferment in the acceptance and counselling of foreign investment applications.

Under the careful guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food Industry and of other government bodies, highly serious steps are taken for the rapid and proper application of the land law right after its promulgation, said Mr. Baltazar approaching the second topic for discussion of his press conference on Tuesday.

Each commune, town or municipality will create commissions, under a decision made by the Prefect's Office, to establish the right of property. These commissions will be led by the mayor, while the creation and assignment of the new titles of property will be established under a government decision, 15 days after the publication of the law. The rules of the operation of these commissions and of the application of the provisions of the land law will be approved in the government's forthcoming session.

The government spokesman denied rumours according to which parallel commissions to watch over elected commissions had been created. We do not need auditors, nor do we need para-legal commissions. The community will elect freely the people they think are competent and reliable, Mr. Baltazar said.

Decision Issued on Pay of Temporarily Unemployed

AU1702194491 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1705 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 17/2/1991—Romania's Government issued a decision signed by Prime Minister Petre Roman on the pay of the personnel of the economic agents whose activity was temporarily interrupted.

The executive decided that for the duration of the temporary interruption of activity of some economic agents, as set by the government, the personnel whose individual work contracts were maintained but who do not work will receive over February 1-March 31 a tax-free amount of 60 per cent of their monthly net nominal salary as well as of the compensation stipulated under the government decision 1163/1990. The sums to pay the amounts above will be made supplied by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security [sentence as received].

Until March 31, 1991 the economic agents whose activity was temporarily interrupted and whose personnel with an individual work contract were maintained will take steps to keep the number of personnel in accordance with the effective possibilities of carrying on activities.

The personnel remaining jobless will benefit by the rights under the law on the social security and the re-training of the unemployed.

Foreign Trade Deficit, 1990 Imports Reviewed

AU2002134391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1008 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 20/2/1991—One can only export what economy produces, tradesmen say and, unfortunately, the latest developments in Romanian foreign trade show they are right.

In 1990, Romanian foreign trade recorded a deficit of 72.3 billion lei, the volume of free currency exports amounting to only 57.9 percent and exports in clearing rubles to 58 percent as against 1989. That is due to a lower production in various economic branches, as for instance: Industrial production 20 percent lower; agricultural production about 3 percent lower; investments about 35 percent lower.

In 1990, imports amounted to 4.374 billion rubles (15 percent less than in 1989) and to 5.132 billion dollars (48 percent more than in 1989). While hard currency purchases of raw materials for the industry from the world market increased by 29.6 percent, imports of consumer goods for the population were 6 times higher in hard currency and only 49.4 percent higher in clearing rubles.

Obviously, foreign trade balance cannot be restored, despite all efforts made by domestic financial circles to find financing solutions with the foreign partners, unless the economic activity is relaunched. We mention that last year only 60 percent of our imports were covered by exports, while over the last 4 or 5 years we had a balance of trade surplus of 2 and even 3 billion dollars.

TAROM Strike Damage Assessment Report

AU1502143591 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1331 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 15/2/1991—The government commission appointed to investigate the causes, circumstances, material consequences and liabilities deriving from the strike started on December 14 by the Navigating Personnel Union of the TAROM airlines, has come up with a report that shows that during the strike, 22 planes were kept idle daily on the average which, according to the chart, could have flown some 3,500 hours.

The reasons for the starting of the strikes, the report shows, consisted, according to the union statement, of seven claims regarding the pay bracket, the pensioning, a five-fold rise in the current pay and the dismissal of the company's administration board as a whole, an official answer regarding the air catastrophe of December 28, 1989, special customs regime, the reorganization of the company with foreign experts.

Prior to the beginning of the strike of December 14, 1990, other claims too were put up, which had been partially settled. Still unsettled were some claims addressed to the company's executive, the transport of the crews, the improvement of the conditions for the personnel's equipment and rest, free meals at canteens, technical equipment, safety and clearing of the aircraft, timely organization of crews' scheduling for flights.

The report also establishes the dropping of the main economic, financial and foreign currency indicators of the company on December 31, 1990 as compared to November 30, 1990, as a direct result of the strike. The performance in December 1990 as compared with the average of eleven previous months shows that the number of conventional passenger kilometers carried dropped from 361 million to 152 million, the monthly net average profit was of only 7.7 million lei as against 22.7 million lei, the free currency takings were 3.644 million dollars as against 5.467 million dollars, while the free currency expenditures mounted from 5.034 million dollars monthly on the average for eleven months to 6.838 million dollars in December.

The report also records some formal and basic faults of the statute of the Navigating Personnel Union and of the way how the starting of the strike was decided, which had important economic and financial-valuta consequences, both for the company and for some travel agencies in the country. The TAROM failed to achieve profits of some 35 million lei, as well as 3.5 million dollars. Some travel agencies in the country, as well as the CASROM commercial company failed to make profits worth some 4 million dollars and 16.5 million lei.

The liability for the economic, financial and free currency consequences incurred by the TAROM company and the national economy, the commission concludes, belongs to the leader of the Navigating Personnel Union, its general steering council as well as to the union members, employees of the company who, by consecutive collective decisions, some of them made against the statute, decided the starting and continuation of the strike in an unjustified manner, since most of the claims put up had already been settled and other ones, like the pay, the pensioning, etc., are the object of normative acts about to be drafted, that fall within the government's or Parliament's competences.

The report proposes the reorganization of the air transport in several companies, and the administration board of the TAROM company should take step to retrieve the expenditures entailed by the non-commercial flights from the navigating personnel who participated in the strike, as well as to assess and retrieve the damage incurred by the company because of the strike, from the natural or juristic persons who are responsible for it. It should be done the same in the case of the damage incurred as a result of the complaints or the cases brought before courts of law by entities using air transport.

Markovic Addresses Current Problems

LD1902223691 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1343 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Belgrade, 19 February (TANJUG)—Real anarchy and economic chaos have to be stopped. Above all, this means reestablishment of broken ties and normalization of payment operations, monetary and foreign currency systems, and the system of foreign economic relations. To achieve all that, i.e. to obtain adequate power, the Federal Executive Council [FEC] has already proposed changes to 12 laws. Establishment of these functions should facilitate creation of conditions for an agreement on the future of the country, FEC President Ante Markovic stressed in today's talk with Yugoslav businessmen. He added that all those involved, particularly the republics, should be called on to reach an agreement on the future of the country.

The talk with Prime Minister Markovic in the Yugoslav Chamber of Economy, which was attended by approximately 140 businessmen and 45 journalists, was preceded by a short introductory speech by President of the Yugoslav Chamber of Economy Dagmar Suster, who insisted on a political agreement on the crisis in the country and establishment of conditions for the functioning of the economy before that agreement is reached, because the present erosion of the system has far-reaching consequences and is pushing the economy toward an abyss.

Having said that the basic (anti-inflationary and stabilization) orientation of the FEC program is good, Suster stressed that certain measures should be firmed up; first of all, the drop in production has to be stopped. At the same time conditions should be created for the recovery of market-orientated production, improvement of solvency, decrease in interest rates, and decrease in personal spending by 10 per cent and public spending by 20 percent compared with two years ago.

In January both forms of spending exceeded the disposable limits; 28 billion [dinars] were earmarked for personal incomes, and 33 billion for general and joint spending, Suster said, adding that the key to reducing public spending lies in the hands of republics, which possess 75 percent of the funds for these purposes. Suster warned that if public spending does not drop, the Assembly of the Yugoslav Chamber of Economy will call on the Yugoslav economy to boycott payments for these expenditures.

In his talk today, the first in a series of talks with Yugoslav businessmen, the FEC president informed the businessmen that an IMF mission that recently paid a visit to Yugoslavia stressed in its report that the FEC program is admirable, but the government needs adequate power to implement it. If the government obtains the power, the IMF will be ready to sign an agreement.

Markovic again pointed to the need to adopt changes to 12 laws and to respect decisions of the SFRY constitutional court on the suspension of 19 laws—four in Slovenia, five in Croatia, and 10 in Serbia. The normalization of functioning of the system should facilitate an agreement with the IMF, the absence of which would cause the absence of support form the EC, the World Bank, and other international financial institutions.

Having asked whether anybody has the right, through internal squabbles, to make it impossible for the country to get the "green light" from the IMF and thus to be included in communications with the world and the capital market, Markovic spoke in favor of curbing political and other passions; the FEC maintains that danger is looming over every part of the country and we can find ourselves in the middle of a crossroads—either to implement reforms further, or to return to centralized administration.

It may be that this will not happen and that there are social tensions that are beyond control; each and every party of society should do its share of duty rather than go around trying to find a permanent scapegoat. The FEC is ready to do its share of duty if it obtains the proposed powers. The government will adjust its economic policy according to real developments, which it was also doing last year. That does not mean that funds should not be paid in the federal budget and that at the same time printing of money can be demanded, for instance for agriculture or pensions. That would mean that there is no way out of the erosion, i.e. a 10-fold increase in the inflation rate that existed before the stabilization program and various other troubles including the notorious "odd and even numbers system" [refers to restrictions imposed on early 1980's whereby the use of vehicles with license plates ending with even numbers was allowed on certain days, while the use of those ending with odd numbers was allowed on other days, due to fuel shortage].

Having recalled that the world economic and trade situation is going our way because of the Gulf war that, particularly in America, has brought to the surface the first signs of recession, Markovic pointed to the huge business dealings in some enterprises as the only way of improving productivity and work efficiency. Therefore, it is extrmely important to speed up the restructuring of ownership on the basis of the law on social capital. So far this process has been initiated in 600 to 700 enterprises, whose property is worth some $4.2 billion. The restructuring of ownership sets the economy free from the domination of politics. Because of that, something paradoxical has occurred—a wide opening up toward the world (90 percent of imports has been liberalized) on the one hand, while on the other there has been internal erection of barriers and separation, i.e. breaking ties that had been maintained for decades. How did you allow this to happen, the FEC president asked the businessmen; someone replied: "No one listens to us."

In his address, which was greeted with applause, the Yugoslav prime minister explained that in successful collectives wages are not restricted, that a 12 billion dinar federal budget reduction has been proposed (from 144 billion dinars to 132 billion), that the new taxation law has simplified the taxation system, and that the overall taxation burden overall has been reduced by 0.7 percentage points.

Customs duties have not been increased, and most taxes and other duties have been reduced. Customs duties, taxes and other duties, he recalled, have been abolished for net importers (those whose exports exceed imports by one third), with the exception of one percent that has been set aside to pay for customs duty records. He recalled that no one in the world has managed to carry out an anti-inflation and stabilization program with a simultaneous growth of production, personal income, and public expenditure.

We are on course to come to an arrangement on sorting out the incursion into our monetary system and on meeting our commitments to the budget, including the exercise to "offset" the claims and the demands, said Markovic, adding that the outstanding commitments to the JNA must be paid in cash. According to yesterday's information, following the incursion into our monetary system, five billion dinars remain that were used in Serbia to pay out pensions,and 1.88 billion dinars were used by the Belgrade Bank.

Having stressed time and time again that the FEC is working for political tension to be cooled and political realities stemming from multipaty elections to be accepted, Markovic remarked that no one is entitled to impose one's own political option on others. He recalled that the FEC has opted for a system that cannot be changed by the victory of any option, although that could bring influence to bear on its faster or slower development. The FEC has opted for democratic and peaceful solutions on the future of the country, which should remain valid even if no agreement is reached. In his assessment six momnths to one year are required for the final outcome.

In this context he recalled the role he played when he recently prevented bloodshed, as he put it, for which some people are denouncing him. Some people appear to be keen on having legal anarchy, a high rate of inflation, and economic chaos because then they can prove that they are indispensable and build their own power base, Markovic said.

The federal prime minister spoke at length about the genesis of the events that were responsible for the current difficult situation, stressing that until last autumn the stabilization program was yielding exceptional results, although it must be admitted that during the third quarter there was excessive pressure regarding the distribution of wages and also the demands to deviate from the monetary framework. During one two-month period 41.6 billion dinars were issued, twice as much as during the entire first half-year. Wage ceilings were breached during the last quarter, during political "battles."

For instance, at that time the public expenditure target was overshot by 65 billion dinars, half of the entire "excessive expenditure" last year. Balance of payments was landed in deficit, and our foreign currency reserves were also reduced during the last quarter.

Events then took off and general erosion occurred which, Markovic said, fueled by the political atmosphere, war games, and sabre-rattling, caused Yugoslavia to go downhill, that is to say it became ranked among the countries in the world with high commercial risk. This brought a halt to joint investments by foreign partners.

Markovic stressed that we have reached the situation he anticipated in his acceptance speech in the SFRY Assembly when during the period of transition from one system to another, conservative, ultra-right, ultra-left, separatist, nationalistic and other forces will try to take advanage of social tensions to stop the reform and bring down its protagonists. Despite their dramatic nature, events should not be looked at tragically. Instead one should try to overcome them efficiently. [passage omitted]

All those taking part in the discussion agreed that a single Yugoslav market does not exist, that our business ties with partners abroad are much more direct, and that legal and economic security does not exist because it is full of ambiguities. Social policy has not advanced much beyond the enterprise; this is a great minus for both the FEC and the republics. In this context Dragomir Hadzic, chief of, the Serbian glass factory in Paracin, remarked that his most important job is to make sure the plant does not stop even for half an hour. If that happens, the factory would perhaps no longer be there, and there are only three such plants in the country.

In the context of all this, one should perhaps mention the statement of Dr. Velimir Brankovic, the Galenika managing director, who in a fairly long address tried to contradict the successes of the reform and of the FEC president personally. He stressed that as a manager he has not won a single game. He countered the prime minister's claim that he was instrumental in preventing bloodshed by remarking that for instance no one in the government, not event the director of customs, was held accountable for the import of weapons. [passage omitted]

Although, in his long introductory statement before the talks with tbe businessmen started, he tried to shed light on the reasons why the reform had partly gone astray, Ante Markovic stressed in his concluding address that the legal functioning of the state is threatened by the non-adoption of amendments to the SFRY constitution presented as early as the end of 1989. Since then constitutions have been adopted in all the republics that are, without exception, at odds with the Yugoslav constitution. Well, strictly speaking, what about the elections, new republican legislatures, and so on.

According to Markovic, the government has put forward a minimum number of conditions in 12, or, rather, in 14 points and in 12 additional proposed laws to allow the state to function until its future or its destiny has finally been decided through peaceful negotiations. He also reiterated that the FEC program and anti-inflation policy have the support of experts worldwide and of all international institutions, but that a consensus for its implementation must be obtained in our country as well. We are constantly spending more than we are creating. Public expenditure must be halted and payments transactions and monetary foreign currency system established, and order must also be introduced into the functioning of our economic relations with foreign countries. The problems of the functioning of the foreign currency market and others will not be resolved until minimum conditions have been established for the functioning of the state, because our reserves amounting to amost $7 billion cannot be risked.

Markovic said that agriculture has not been neglected and that a discussion on it is impending to enable it to catch up with other places in the world. Non-payment of funds into the budget and the fact that they are channelled in different dirctions jeopardizes many obligations of the federation. In other words all commitments must be fulfilled, and without that the federation, that is the state, cannot function. This year the FEC has once again put social policy [expenditure] into the budget, and has even asked foreign countries to contribute about $200 million for this purpose.

Among other things the FEC president said that six payment systems, monetary and foreign currency policies cannot function in the country in addition to the federal ones. Everything has to be done to ensure unhampered work of the market and flow of commodities, services, capital and work. He added that the restructuring of the economy and ownership cannot be replaced by anything else.

He said in conclusion that he does not want to go into political polemics, because this was not the objective of the meeting today.

Meets Provincial Leaders

LD1502095291 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2012 GMT 14 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, 14 Feb (TANJUG)—Representatives of the republican and provincial governments, who have had two talks with Federal Executive Council [FEC] President Ante Markovic over the past few days, have expressed their readiness to adopt most of the FEC's propositions about the functioning of the federation in the transitional period. These talks will continue to deal with some open issues on which no agreement has been reached—such as the obligations of the republics and provinces toward the federal budget. This was stressed at the FEC's session this afternoon.

The FEC Information Secretariat reports that it was assessed that there are realistic prospects for the economic and legal system to function normally in the transitional period, while the talks on Yugoslavia's future are under way. The FEC will consider suggestions presented by representatives of the republics and provinces, and will continue to exercise this form of cooperation with them. This particularly refers to the new draft federal budget, which will be endorsed only after consultations with representatives of the executive councils and governments of the republics and provinces. At the same time it will insist that current obligations toward the present budget, adopted by the SFRY Assembly, should be met continuously until the new budget is endorsed—that is, by the end of the first quarter, and not later than by the end of the second quarter of this year. Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs Budimir Loncar informed the FEC about the two-day meeting of representatives of 15 nonaligned countries held in Belgrade, whose principal aim was to consider the Gulf crisis and seek solutions for its termination. The FEC regards the initiative for and the organization and workstyle of this meeting as good, and feels that it could influence the outcome of the crisis in this area.

The FEC is also expected to consider some other questions—including the implementation of the program of economic reform—at its session today.

Holds Talks With Officials

AU1902205191 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 13 Feb 91 p 1

[Dj. Kesic report: "The Deaf Do Not Believe the Dumb"]

[Excerpts] Belgrade—Talks on the country's political future began today at 1000 at a session of an expanded SFRY Presidency and were a continuation of the overture of yesterday's meeting between Federal Executive Council President Ante Markovic and the presidents of the Executive Councils of our federal units. We have learned unofficially that not all the presidents of the governments of the republics attended the session, which was called by Prime Minister Markovic and started yesterday at 1000 and continued until late last night. This was to a certain extent an indication of the willingness of the republics to discuss the country's political future in a well-intentioned way. The presidents of the governments of Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Croatia sent their deputies to the meeting with the federal prime minister, which had on its agenda the "Platform of 12 Points" on the minimum for the functioning of the federal state in the transitional period.

The session was held behind closed doors. As expected, the Federal Secretariat for Information will issue a statement on the overall results of the talks. [passage omitted]

Seen in a wider political context, Prime Minister Markovic's talks yesterday were nevertheless an improvement

on the negotiations in the SFRY Presidency because no one walked out of the session, even though the talks were full of intransigence and the participants were looking out for their own best interests. [passage omitted]

Republics Dispute Federal Funding

AU1902212391 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 14 Feb 91 p 5

[Djoko Kesic report: "Forced Consensus"]

[Text] It is not completely clear whether 18 February will really be the ("D") day when our republics are due to start regularly paying their contributions to the federal budget and respecting all federal regulations. The report by the Federal Secretariat for Information on the results of the talks held the day before yesterday between Prime Minister Ante Markovic and the presidents and representatives of the republican governments radiates the needed but slightly inaccurate optimism. A more precise formulation of the results of these talks is—significant progress in negotiations on the minimum for the functioning of the federal state in the transitional period, but without a firm and definite agreement.

Viewed overall, Croatia's representatives have most radically changed their stands. And it is also positive that Slovenia has remained consistently loyal to the orientation "that it does not have the authority to agree to anything," while Serbia's representatives have been and remain faithful to inarticulate and unspecific stands. According to participants in the session, the only progress by Slovenia is in the fact that Joze Mencinger spoke in Serbo-Croatian at this session, while he spoke only Slovene at the previous one. What is also stressed as progress is the fact that the representatives of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia have been the most constructive, while Jure Pelivan, prime minister of Bosnia-Hercegovina, has provided the link in the negotiations.

A Slovene Does Not Have the Authority

The main issue of the talks held the day before yesterday—the financing of the federal budget—teetered on the verge of agreement, but the Slovene vice president said that he did not have the power to endorse this agreement. The federal government took the stand that the agreement on financing the federation cannot be settled in bits. Neither the foreign currency market nor the payments system will function and, until finance is provided for the federal state purse, banks will not be guaranteed access to the foreign currency market. Or, those who do not fulfill their obligations will not be given access to the foreign currency market. Despite the fact that no final agreement was reached on financing the federal state, it was the impression of the participants that consensus is not impossible.

It was much easier to hold talks on clearing the debts between the federation and republics. The only contentious thing was the level of these debts. The republics claim that the federation owes them 20 billion dinars, while the federal government representatives are attempting to prove that this debt amounts to slightly more than 13 billion dinars. The republics owe the federation more than 12 billion dinars. It was agreed that the republican finance ministers would meet in the federal government on 18 February to establish a way to clear the debts and to try to determine precise figures for the amounts owed. It was not ruled out that a new step forward would be taken then in financing the federal state purse.

An extremely interesting discussion was held on financing the Yugoslav People's Army [JNA]. The federal government is demanding that 5.5 billion dinars be paid for the Army in cash in three installments in three weeks time. The representatives of the republican governments initially agreed to this sum being taken out of the primary issue. Ante Markovic said that this was no problem since this was exactly the amount planned for the primary issue for the first quarter of this year. If this were to happen, banks would not get one single dinar from the primary issue in this period. The representatives of the republican governments told the prime minister that they simply do not have any money. Croatian Vice President Franjo Gregoric even said that their poverty goes so far that they have to reduce the pay of their employees by 50 percent. "Had we received that loan of $4 billion from the Vatican there would be no problems," Gregoric said. It was nevertheless finally agreed, without Slovenia's consent, that the money owed to the JNA for 1990 would be paid over the next three weeks. Slovenia will present its stand later on.

Nikola Stanic's Fury

The most dramatic discussion held concerned financing the quicker development of the undeveloped. Serbian Vice President Nikola Stanic made the acceptance of settling the federation's budget conditional upon the payment of debts to the Fund of the Federation for the quicker development of the undeveloped. The participants in the discussion convinced him that this could in no way be linked. On the other hand, Franjo Gregoric made meeting the debts to the undeveloped for 1989 and 1990 conditional upon the money going to Kosovo and not Serbia because as he put it "due to the customs law" and the boycott of goods from Croatia so much damage has been done to the economy of Croatia that the figures give one a headache.

This provoked the anger of Nikola Stanic, who said that if this is accepted, Serbia would reject all 12 points.

There was the proposal, which Stanic accepted, that the Serbian and Croatian finance ministers sit around a negotiating table and hold talks to possibly clear these debts. The agreement was finally reached (again without Slovenia) that the republics should pay the money owed to the undeveloped for 1989 and 1990, with the acknowledgement that these debts can be paid by enterprises investing directly in the undeveloped areas.

The figures regarding the debt were disputed on this point, too. Serbia claimed that the money owed to the undeveloped amounts to 772 million dinars but according to the figures of the Fund for the Undeveloped, the debt amounts to 650 million dinars.

Federal government representatives announced that a proposal on a new way of financing the undeveloped through special banks had been prepared and will soon be discussed in the National Assembly.

This was the way one more round of talks ended between representatives of the republican governments and the federal government on the minimum for the functioning of the federal state in the transitional period. The outcome of the latest talks can be judged by the words of Serbian Vice President Stanic voiced at the end of the session: "We did not reach agreement on anything." Or, by another more optimistic view that these talks were nevertheless a step forward in comparison with earlier attempts to deal with this subject and that these talks will continue virtually ad infinitum. Of course, all this optimism can either be crushed or developed with the results of yesterday's session of the expanded SFRY Presidency.

Federal Budget Proceedings

LD1402213791 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1215 GMT 14 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Belgrade, 14 Feb (TANJUG)—The Federal Chamber of the SFRY Assembly today adopted by urgent procedure a law on changes to the law on the implementation of the federal budget for 1990. With these changes, which were proposed by the Federal Executive Council [FEC] last year, the budgetary year for last year has been extended to 31 March to overcome the insolvency in the federal coffers and settle amounts owing to beneficiaries of the budget for newly-acquired revenue.

The chamber also adopted several laws from the so-called regular assembly proceedings, including a law on the production and circulation of narcotics, a law on the sale of poisons, and changes and amendments to two laws from the field of transportation—on maritime and inland waterway shipping and the law on road safety. [passage omitted]

The Assembly did not discuss today the political situation in the country and in particular the unauthorized formation of armed groups, despite the fact that this was proposed by two of its committees—the National Defense Committee and the Internal Policy Committee. The view prevailed that not all conditions for the debate had been fulfilled, because delegates had not yet received all the necessary information.

The chamber decided that the debate on this should be held at the next session, convened on 20 February. For this session, the SFRY Presidency and FEC are to prepare detailed reports on the situation in the country which will also encompass the international position of Yugoslavia, with special reference to its relations with neighboring countries. Also adopted was a proposal of delegate Husein Hodzic that Assembly President Slobodan Gligorijevic should report to the chamber on the position and role of the federal legislature in the talks on the future system of Yugoslavia that are under way in the SFRY Presidency. [passage omitted]

Radivoje Scekic proposed that the federal secretary for foreign affairs should submit a report to today's session on Yugoslavia's international position, with special reference to the attitudes of the governments of European countries, particularly neighboring states, the Vatican, and the United States toward the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Yugoslavia.

FEC Vice President Zivko Pregl proposed that the issue of Yugoslavia's international relations should be considered at the next session of the chamber, as part of the material to be prepared by the SFRY presidency and FEC on the political situation in the country. This was approved. [passage omitted]

The chamber also adopted a law on the federal office for trade in special purpose products, enabling the office to be organized as a modern business unit adapted to the conditions of modern international trade.

Under the adopted act, this institution, which is concerned with the importation and export of arms and military equipment for the needs of the Yugoslav Armed Forces, is able to do business according to the regulations applicable to enterprises in the social sector, with certain exceptions arising out of the nature of the business transactions.

Suspension of Unconstitutional Laws Ordered

LD1902183991 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1754 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 19 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Federal Government has called on all the Yugoslav republics immediately to suspend the implementation of the laws which have been proclaimed unconstitutional by the constitutional court of Yugoslavia.

In a statement released today, the Federal Secretariat for Information recalled that the republican leaderships had agreed at the latest round of the Yugoslav "summit" to implement the decisions of the constitutional court of Yugoslavia, assessing that as one of the chief conditions for ensuring the required minimum for the federation to function in the transitional period, that is, until a new, historical accord on Yugoslavia's future is reached.

The constitutional court of Yugoslavia has proclaimed unconstitutional 20 regulations. The largest number of unconstitutional decisions, or ten, have been passed by the parliament of the Republic of Serbia. The parliaments of the republics of Croatia and Slovenia have each passed four unconstitutional decisions.

The Yugoslav Federal Government today urged the Yugoslav republics not to adopt new legislation which would run counter to the federal constitution and the federal legal order until an accord on the country's new state order is reached.

Chinese Envoy, Loncar, Discuss National Issues

LD1802163191 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1518 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 18 (TANJUG)—A special envoy of the Chinese Government and Deputy Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang and Yugoslav Foreign Secretary Budimir Loncar discussed the situation in Europe and in Yugoslavia in Belgrade on Monday.

Loncar informed Yang about Yugoslavia's stands and actions taken for the settlement of the crisis in the Gulf and the Middle East.

Yang invited Loncar to visit China soon.

Yang arrived in Belgrade this morning on a two-day visit to Yugoslavia. Upon his arrival, he met Assistant Yugoslav Foreign Secretary Branko Lukovac and discussed the Gulf crisis and the two countries' efforts to stop the war and create conditions for a peaceful settlement.

Lukovac informed Yang about the non-aligned countries' foreign ministers consultative meeting in Belgrade recently.

Yang set out China's views on the Gulf crisis, stressing the close stands of Yugoslavia and China on the settlement of the Gulf crisis and finding ways to end the war.

Slovene Assembly To Decide on 'Independence'

AU2002080991 Belgrade Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0300 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] The deputies of all three chambers of the Slovene Assembly will discuss today in separate sessions the draft constitutional amendments 99 and 100 on the autonomy and independence [samostalnost and nezavisnost] of Slovenia.

The promulgation of the amendments, if they are adopted, will take place in a joint session. Milan Kucan and Janez Drnovsek will make opening speeches. They will brief the deputies on the outcome of the interrepublican talks.

Within the second part of this point on the agenda, the deputies will discuss the proposal for consentaneous separation from Yugoslavia.

Separation Document Published

AU1902192191 Ljubljana DELO in Slovene 15 Feb 91 p 2

[Text] Ljubljana, 14 Feb—Next week, when the Slovene Assembly adopts and promulgates amendments to the Slovene Constitution—which, among other things, should take away from federal entities the power of realizing Slovenia's sovereign rights—the deputies, as Slovene politicians say, will also adopt the document on consentaneous separation [razdruzitev]. Here is the working text of the document:

The Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia on the Proposal on Consentaneous Separation of the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY

I

On the basis of the permanent and inalienable right of the Slovene people to self-determination, which is one of the basic principles of international law, and on the basis of valid constitutional provisions of the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY, a plebiscite was carried out in the Republic of Slovenia on 23 December 1990 to decide whether the Republic of Slovenia should become an autonomous and independent state that will no longer be part of the SFRY.

By voting at the plebiscite, the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia legally expressed their political will that the Republic of Slovenia should become a sovereign state, which would enjoy all actual powers on its territory and full international subjectivity [subjektivitet].

The plebiscitary decision obligates the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia and other state entities of the Republic of Slovenia to take over the realization of all sovereign rights that the Republic of Slovenia had transferred to the SFRY entities and to do so within six months after the proclamation of the results of the plebiscite. The decision made at the plebiscite also obligates the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia to begin negotiations about the legal succession [nasledstvo] of the SFRY and the future establishment of mutual relations on the basis of principles of international law.

II

In conformity with its aforementioned powers, the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia sends the SFRY Assembly, as the state servoce with full international subjectivity, the following proposal on consentaneous separation of the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY:

1. The present state, the SFRY, consentaneously separates into two new sovereign and independent states—the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY. Both new states, which are created after the separation, recognize each other and on that basis ensure international subjectivity and all actual powers on their territory.

2. The border between the two new states is the same as the border between the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia within the present SFRY. The borders of the new state, the Republic of Slovenia, with other states are the same as the internationally recognized borders of the SFRY with the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Austria, and the Republic of Italy. The two states recognize all interstate agreements

through which the borders of the present SFRY were established and will advocate compliance with them.

The two new states, that is, the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY, will respect all joint borders, as well as borders of all states in Europe, as inviolable, and will do so in conformity with the CSCE Final Act.

The new states will mutually respect the territorial integrity of each of the two states. In this respect, they oppose any activity that is not in conformity with the aims and principles of the UN Charter, any activity that is directed against the territorial integrity, political independence, and unity of either of the two states, and particularly any such activity that would mean threats with force or use of force.

3. The Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY will carry out the process of separation gradually, consentaneously, and on the basis of the provisions of international law, included in the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the 1978 Vienna Convention on the Succession of States in Respect to Treaties, and the 1983 Vienna Convention on the Succession of States in Respect to State Property, Archives, and Debts.

The process of separation will be carried out in such a way that legitimate interests of the two states and their present joint institutions, or the interests of third states and the international community will not be affected. Possible mutual disputes will be solved in a peaceful way, so that they do not endanger international peace, security, and justice. They will try to arrive at just solutions in a spirit of good will and cooperation and to do so on the basis of international law and within an agreed time.

The two states will advocate permanent and institutionalized forms of cooperation and development of mutual relations in the interest of their peoples. By developing equal cooperation, they will endeavor to further mutual understanding and confidence, friendly and good-neighborly relations, international peace, security, and justice. They will also strive to increase their people's wealth by developing cooperation. On that basis they will develop permanent forms of economic, cultural, and scientific cooperation, and will support each other in joining European and world forms of interstate cooperation and links.

III

The delegation appointed to negotiate with the SFRY Assembly on the basis of this resolution will consist of the following people:....

Amendment on Sovereign Rights

AU1902143091 Ljubljana DELO in Slovene 14 Feb 91 p 1

[Majda Vukelic report: "Transfer of Sovereign Rights From the Federation to Slovenia"]

[Text] Ljubljana, 13 Feb—At its session today, the republican constitutional commission endorsed amendments 99 and 100 to the republican constitution by which Slovenia takes over the sovereign rights that it had transferred to Yugoslav entities. The amendments should be promulgated at the joint session of the assembly chambers next week.

The proposal of Amendment 99 envisages that the republic should decide on regulating all relations in Slovenia, as well as the relations with other countries and international organizations. The assembly regulates through laws all relations that are of common significance for all citizens of Slovenia, their organizations, and communities. Regarding relations with other states and international organizations, Slovenia regulates them in conformity with the international law and—being one of the legal successor of the SFRY— in conformity with international agreements reached by the SFRY. This amendment abolishes all provisions of the Slovene constitution that transfered the realization of sovereign rights of the republic onto the services of the SFRY and the provisions that regulate Slovenia's position within the SFRY, as well as relations resulting from that position.

The amendment also abolishes those provisions of the republican constitution that establish a land-holding maximum for cultivated land and forests, as well as provisions that exclude ownership rights to building land in towns and urban settlements. The transformation of social property into public and other forms of property, as well as the division of property will be regulated by law. Draft amendments did not include these two additions, they were proposed during the public debate with the remark that these constitutional changes should make the adoption of new laws possible that would reform ownership relations.

The Legislative-Legal Commission proposed an amendment according to which republican administrative services would be given the power to decide which federal regulations are not valid in Slovenia. Several constitutional commission members were against this solution and Legislature Minister Lojze Janko was of the opinion that such a solution should be rejected on the basis of legal consistency [pravna konsistentnost] because it may lead to a complete legal chaos. He added that such a solution would not be appropriate at the time when working draft of the document on consentaneous separation of Slovenia and Yugoslavia was being made.

After the debate in which arguments in favor of changing the Slovene flag before adopting the new constitution and contrary to it were made one after another, the commission decided about the form of the proposal of amendment 100 by voting. According to the proposal, the flag would be the same as it was before, only without the star.

The commission also met behind closed doors and, as we learned, adopted guidelines and starting points for preparing constitutional law in the sphere of national defense.

Janez Jansa held the introductory speech on this problem.

[Following passage appears boxed within the body of the item]

The constitutional commission supported the compromise proposal made by Defense Minister Janez Jansa by which the Executive Council would issue regulations to establish which federal regulations regarding the implementation of federal laws (that is, ordinances) should not be valid in Slovenia.

Document Initiates Polemics

AU1602183691 Belgrade Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Relja Atanasijevic report on the text of a proposal on national seperation in Ljubljana on 16 February]

[Text] The working text of the proposal on our country's consentaneous separation [razdruzivanje] into two new sovereign and independent states—the Republic of Slovenia and the SFRY—which was published yesterday has become a topic for polemics held at the moment in Slovene political circles and by the public.

[Atanasijevic] It seems that there is a certain disharmony in the recent rapid political moves. Without making any protest, the Slovene Assembly has announced that Ljubljana DELO, without authorization, published the text of a proposed resolution that is still to be amended and worked upon until the Republican Assembly session is held on 22 February. Because the time until the adoption of that historic document was short, DELO hurried to inform the public about it. Apart from that, the paper quickly conducted an opinion poll on this issue and published its results today. The respondents were asked whether they think they will have it easier in an independent country: Nearly 65 percent of them gave an affirmative answer, others either said no, or that they did not know, adding, however, that Slovenia cannot survive without connections with some other state.

The party of Slovene reformists has said that it supports a different resolution, not one like the one presented in the published working text, which in fact speaks about Slovenia's secession and leaving other parts of Yugoslavia untouched. This, the reformists add, prejudges the intentions of other republics that still have not decided about the kind of community they would like to live in. Another outstanding view expressed by Ribicic's party says that the working text of the Slovene resolution involves no initiative about links and cooperation with other republican states after the process of separation, something that would make the process of separation more peaceful and successful and would help establish new and more modern links in mutual interest. This formulation is broad and can be interpreted in different ways.

Dr. Jurjan [name indistinct] and (?Dane Ocvirk) have also joined the polemics by saying that they have taken no part in drafting that hapless and inadequately prepared historic document, although the Slovene Assembly claims that international law and international legal documents have been respected in it.

At the end of this report one should add the statement by Slovene President Lojze Peterle, who is on a tour of the Benelux countries, that the Ljubljana press carries today. On the basis of the talks he had there, he said the following: Europe's stand concerning Slovenia's intention to leave Yugoslavia has not changed. They have let us know that Europe wants a united Yugoslavia and that we have to agree about its future in a peaceful and democratic way. Peterle added that he was told that Slovenia cannot have direct contacts and cooperation with the European Parliament.

Slovenia's Assembly Poised For 'Breakaway'

LD1902193791 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1855 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Cologne, Feb 19 (TANJUG)—Lojze Peterle, prime minister of the Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia, stated in Cologne today that the parliament would tomorrow adopt a declaration of the Slovene Republic's breakaway from Yugoslavia.

Peterle spoke at a news conference at the Cologne international fair of household appliances, at which Slovene manufacturers are also exhibiting.

The Slovene prime minister said that businessmen in Europe supported Slovenia's wish to become autonomous, but that political circles in that part of the world wanted Yugoslavia as one.

Peterle assessed that Slovenia's divorce from Yugoslavia was imminent, among other things, because of a growing fear of a "restoration of the old system in all of the country," which he said was attempted "through the new Communist Party, with the support of the Army."

Slovene Opposition Leader Interviewed

LD1802051591 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1354 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 16 (TANJUG)—The unilateral secession of the Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia from Yugoslavia "would put it in an uncomfortable international position", so that "reaching accord on dissociation" will remain the main task of the Slovenian leadership, the weekend issue of the Belgade daily BORBA writes today.

The daily explains that in the event of the secession of one or two of the republics, the legal successor of Yugoslavia "would be the remainder of the country, if it agrees to continue to remain together."

In this case, accoding to BORBA, the newly formed states would have to wait longer for international recognition, including foreign exchange aid from abroad, so badly needed at this moment.

For this reason BORBA concludes that leading Slovenian officials, "although they announced their own currency, banks and a moratorium on military service in Yugoslav People's Army", could still be expected to attend Yugoslav summits which are to discuss the future organization of Yugoslavia.

Emil Milan Pinter, head of the Slovenian shadow cabinet, believes the Slovenian government has shut itself in and has left the setting out of its stands to "the manipulated public media."

In an interview today published by the Belgrade daily VECERNJE NOVOSTI, Pinter said the Slovenian government should "strengthen [words indistinct] in Belgrade and the federal institutions and promote the stands of the republic in the right way.

Pinter, however, said that despite criticism of the Slovenian government, the opposition will not demand its replacement because Slovenia has no possibility of forming a better government.

A public poll, today published by the Ljubljana daily DELO, shows what the Slovenians think themselves about the republic's secession. As much as 64.4 percent of the polled believe Slovenia should definitely embark on the road to become independent.

As much as 55.5 percent of the polled think it necessary to speed up the process of becoming independent even before the six-month period set by the republic's assembly.

A ltle over one third of the polled (39.9 percent) advises Slovenia to be cautious and to continue talks on a confederation, while 0.5 percent think that the republic should go along with the will of the majority in Yugoslavia.

The poll showed that 21.5 percent were against Slovenia's definitely taking to the road toward independence.

Ljubljana's DELO [word indistinct] recently conducted the poll among some 731 persons randomly selected from the telephone book.

Opposition Rejects Separate Secession

LD1502233791 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1738 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Ljubljana, 15 Feb (TANJUG)—Using the caption "for a different resolution", the Party of Democratic Reform [SDR] today acquainted the public with its position regarding "the document on disassociation", published in the daily DELO. It stresses that it does not agree with this document because it diverts from the content of the plebiscite's decision and the letter of good intentions.

The SDR of Slovenia supports the idea of such a resolution that would mean the implementation of the plebiscite's decision on an independent and sovereign Slovenia, the statements says. The ex-communists, however, warn that splitting the SFRY into two, whereby one part would still be the SFRY and the other would be the Republic of Slovenia, would mean secession.

The largest opposition party in the republic's assembly stresses that it is not logical to speak of dissociation in the light of such a solution. By this resolution, the SFRY would remain intact despite the fact that it was founded in agreement by all the peoples and republics, including Slovenia. By so doing, we are prejudicing the stands and aspirations of the other republics that have not yet decided in what kind of community, if any, they want to live.

Seeing Slovenia as one entity, and the remaining part of the SFRY as another compact and uniform entity, is an inconceivable mistake both in the light of the way the SFRY was created and of the alredy presented positions of several republics that the SFRY cannot remain as it is without one of its republics, the statement, signed by Ciril Ribicic and Miran Potrc, says. In this context, one realizes that the resolution does not include the initiative of the assembly of the Republic of Slovenia for links and cooperation with the other republican states following the completion of the process of dissociation.

Austrian Daily: Slovenia To Declare Border

AU1902190391 Belgrade Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Slovenia will declare its border with Croatia a state border before the Yugoslav summit scheduled for 22 February. In this way Slovenia will start the process of separation from Yugoslavia. This is claimed by Vienna DIE PRESSE.

The paper also claims that the talks at the Yugoslav summit in Sarajevo will not concentrate on how to rescue Yugoslavia, but on how to find a way for the republics to separate from one another. Moreover, it adds that the republics have been authorized to calculate their share of assets and liabilities in the federation.

Serbian, Slovenian 'Shadow' Officials Meet

LD1802023991 Belgrade TANJUG in English 0230 GMT 14 Feb 91

[Text] Belgrade, Feb 13 (TANJUG)—Delegations of the "shadow government" formed by the opposition political parties in the republic of Slovenia, and the Serbian Renewal Movement, the biggest opposition party in Serbia, concluded at a meeting in Belgrade today that "Yugoslavia is possible if national passions are [words indistinct] an announcement from the meeting, the first ever between Slovenian and Serbian opposition forces, demanded the depoliticalization of the Yugoslavian Armed Forces and the disarming of all "paramilitary

organizations which endanger the survival of the Serbian people, especially in the republic of Croatia and the province of Kosovo."

The meetings between the opposition parties will continue—before TV cameras—in Belgrade early in March, the announcement said, adding that two weeks later the delegations will hold talks in the Slovenian capital Ljubljana.

The Serbian and Slovenian leaderships have conflicting views on the future of the country, with Serbia insisting on a federal organization and Slovenia advocating a loose alliance of sovereign states.

The delegation of Slovenia's "shadow government" talked also today with Democratic Party rerpesentatives on Yugoslavia's future state-and-political transformation and relations between Serbia and Slovenia.

On account of like views on essential matters it was agreed. It was announced, that a meeting of representatives of the clubs of deputies of Serbia's and Slovenia's opposition parties be held soon for the purpose of setting up joint working bodies. They would be entrusted with drafting concrete proposals for solving joint [word indistinct] problems.

The statement made by Milan Kucan, president of Slovenia, on Slovenia's leaving Yugoslavia is no result of the competent political bodies of that republic and no expression of its public opinion's political conviction at large.

There is a full agreement in Slovenia on the necessity for the republic to become sovereign and substantive, but this does not automatically mean an agreement on the need for it to secede from Yugoslavia, representatives of the "shadow government" said.

The Democratic Party representatives said that "a voluntary consensus" of all the republics has to be reached on Yugoslavia's future order, be it [words indistinct] confederal.

Split in Serbian Democratic Party Viewed

AU1602214291 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 8 Feb 91 p 4

[I. Radovanovic and V. Ilic report: "The Dilemmas of Natural Allies"]

[Excerpts] Probably because they were preoccupied with proving the thesis that Serbs are Chetniks and Croats are Ustasha, the journalists of the "official press" of the two belligerent republics neglected to report last Sunday about an event that is, to judge by everything, one of the most important ones for the future of inter-Serb and even Serb-Croat relations in Croatia.

The report (carried only in BORBA) says that a meeting of the regional committee of the Serbian Democratic Party for Slavonia and Baranja was held on 3 February in the spa town of Lipik, about 60 kilometers from Virovitica, and that a new leadership was elected for this committee.

Even though this was not said at the meeting itself, the election of the new leadership of the Serbian Democratic Party for Slavonia and Baranja completes one of the great battles (the war goes on) between two opposing wings in the Serbian Democratic Party itself. This was done in the following way: People loyal to Jovan Raskovic (BORBA received assurances that most of these people are actually in the regions of Slavonia and Baranja) outvoted the people who support the second most important Serb in Croatia, Dr. Milan Babic.

To explain this claim (voiced in Serbian circles that are well informed about events in the Serbian Democratic Party) it is necessary to return a little to the past and to the "Knin" past. This is primarily because it was actually in Knin that something was perceived for the first time which at least "smelled" like a conflict between Raskovic, who is adored by many Serbs, and is the "politician of the moment," Dr. Milan Babic. [passage omitted]

The public knows that prior to all the more important Knin events, Raskovic and Babic were "guests" of Belgrade, but something else was concealed very well from them. This is a story (told to BORBA by someone at the very top of the Serbian Democratic Party) that says Babic is very close to the Serbian authorities ("because he is obedient") while Raskovic is necessary for the moment ("because he has the people with him") and that official Serbia is definitely "rooting" for Babic because "Raskovic is an anti-Communist after all." [passage omitted]

As BORBA's sources claim, it should not be thought that the political stands of the belligerent sides are not identical: "Both sides are fighting for the same things, with the difference that Raskovic and Vojislav Vukcevic, Raskovic's main lieutenant for Slavonia and Baranja, advocate a policy that is based on political means in the hands of intellectuals while Babic and his followers believe that it is sufficient to distribute arms to the people or to secede and end the whole story."

[The following passage appears boxed within the body of the item]

Babic's Rating Falls

We have learned from those who are well informed about events in Knin that in his meetings there, Dr. Milan Babic did not receive a lot of support from Knin people when it came to "replacing" or rather "pushing out" Dr. Jovan Raskovic "from power" in these regions. Babic's political assault has been quite unfavorably commented upon in the Knin Krajina, while Raskovic's popularity seems to be almost inviolable. Particular dissatisfaction was caused by Babic's visit to official Belgrade, whose "socialist orientation" has fewer and fewer supporters in Knin.

Kucan News Conference After Presidency Session

AU1902202391 Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 14 Feb 91 p 16

[Stane Pucko report: "A Significantly Different Climate"]

[Text] Ljubljana—The climate at this session was significantly different from those in the last two sessions. This was stated by Milan Kucan last Wednesday [13 February] on his return from Belgrade where he attended the SFRY Presidency session. According to the agreement reached in the political leadership of Slovenia and after the talks with the Croatian leadership on Tuesday, Kucan, answering the question on who was in fact prepared to live together in one state, said in Belgrade that Slovenia is in favor of a community of sovereign states based on real economic interests. But if this was not possible to accomplish, he added, he would accept the challenge of living in an independent state.

The Concept of Separation

Kucan said that he briefed those present in the session on the principles and concept of separation that would be recommended to the Slovene Assembly next Wednesday [20 February]. Through this separation, the SFRY would be divided into one or more sovereign and independent states and other states who want to retain federal relations. All new states would recognize one another, they would be equal heirs to the SFRY, the borders between the republics would be identical to the present republican borders, the borders with other countries would be the internationally recognized borders of the present SFRY, and all states would recognize these borders and would also recognize the territorial integrity of one another. In line with this, they would renounce all acts that are not in accord with the aims and principles of the UN Charter, particularly those activities that would amount to the use of armed force or a threat with armed force.

Division of "Inheritance"

At the Presidency session in Belgrade, Kucan said that Slovenia will pursue the process of separation gradually, consentaneously, and on the basis of international law, which means that Slovenia wants to be a subject of all material and legal inheritances, in both the good and bad sense, including debts. The process of separation would flow in such a way that it would not violate the legitimate interests of the new states and their institutions, or the interests of third states and international institutions.- Slovenia wants mutual disputes to be resolved in a peaceful way without endangering international peace, security, and justice, within a specified period of time. If this does not happen, it will approach the International Court in the Hague. At the session, Kucan also expressed readiness for permanent and institutionalized relations and forms of cooperation and the development of bilateral relations with other states, that is, the present republics. He stressed that this did not amount to any kind of secession, but separation because this is how Yugoslavia was created in the first place.

Clean Accounts in All Variants

According to Kucan, the session adopted the proposal that the Federal Executive Council should start work on the division of the SFRY's rights and obligations, because everybody was of the view that clean accounts are needed in any case. The major difference in the current understanding of the meaning of sovereignty—one sovereign state with equal republics that are not sovereign, on the one hand, and republics that are completely sovereign states, on the other hand—was not resolved at the session, and, according to Kucan, one should not expect significant progress in the future either.

Tudjman Travelled to Zagreb Via Ljubljana

On his return from Belgrade, Kucan was welcomed at Ljubljana airport by Franjo Tudjman, whose plane could not land in Zagreb because of fog. Kucan kept his colleague company from Croatia until he left for Zagreb. Dr. Tudjman arrived in Zagreb by car late in the evening.

Manolic Urges Strengthening Republican Defense

LD1502230891 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2041 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Zagreb Feb 15 (TANJUG)—Prime Minister of the Yugoslav Republic of Croatia Josip Manolic today said Croatia would strengthen its defence capabilities in the coming period.

Manolic spoke in Zagreb, at a gathering of local officials from Croatia on topical problems of the economic and political crisis in the republic.

'In dealing with the current problems, Croatia will give priority to capacitation of its defence capabilities, resolving of economic difficulties and restructuring of the state and economic system', Manolic said.

Lately, Croatian officials have frequently stressed that the republic's sovereignty is threatened by a possible military intervention to cut off its road to democracy and independence.

Croatia's conflict with the Yugoslav military leadership was sparked off last month when Croatian authorities failed to carry out an order to disarm para-military formations illegally armed from abroad.

According to Manolic, the Yugoslav crisis boils down to a conflict between democratic and dogmatic forces. He said, however, that he was convinced that it might be resolved in a peaceful and democratic manner.

Manolic reiterated that Croatia would continue its dialogue with the other republics on a possible new organization of Yugoslavia.

Izetbegovic on Bosnia-Herecegovina Sovereignty

LD1702160991 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1048 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Sarajevo, 17 Feb (TANJUG)—The host of the Yugoslav summit scheduled to take place in Sarajevo on 22 February, Bosnia-Hercegovina Presidency President Alija Izetbegovic said in an interview with YUTEL that the mistrust of each other by some of the republic's leaders is the main obtacle to an agreement on Yugoslavia's future.

In his view, it will perhaps take up to 10 years until this is settled. Izetbegovic nevertheless expects a minor miracle may happen at the SFRY Presidency's meeting in Sarajevo and that first moves may be made at creating a new Yugoslav community within which all the republics and peoples will have full sovereignty and equality.

Moreover, he said that it would be a risky political move for the Serbian Democratic Party [Srpska Demokratska Stranka—SDS] of Bosnia-Hercegovina if it failed to accept Bosnia-Hercegovina's declaration of sovereignty, proposed by the Party of Democratic Action [Stranka Demokratske Akcije—SDA]. This is a document that may be amended by agreement, but to turn it down in advance may mean opposing this republic's sovereignty, Izetbegovic said.

Nevertheless, he maintains that after talks between the two parties, SDS and SDA, the situation will be clarified and the Assembly will adopt the declaration that will provide for Bosnia-Hercegovina's equitable treatment in the talks on Yugoslavia's future.